

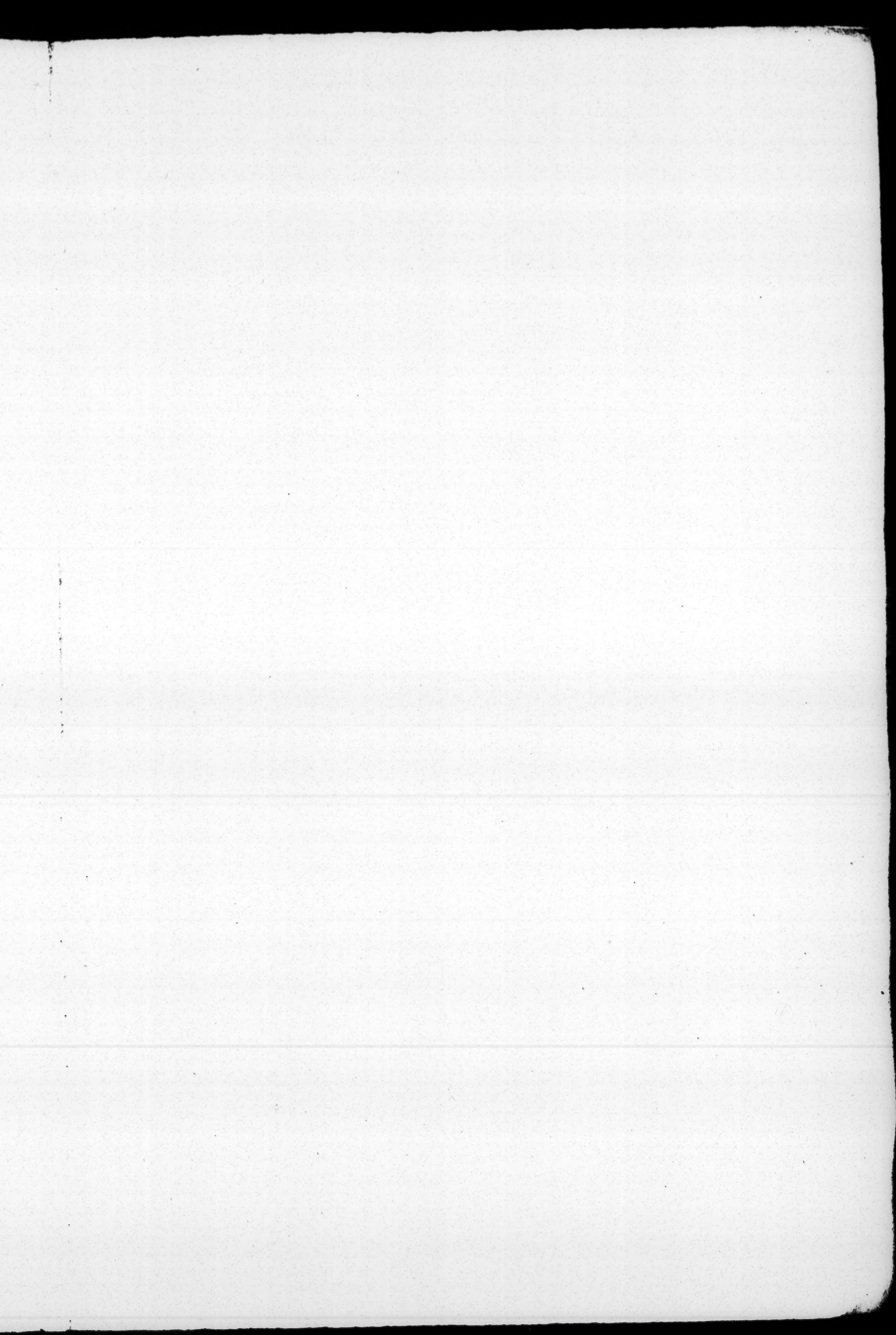


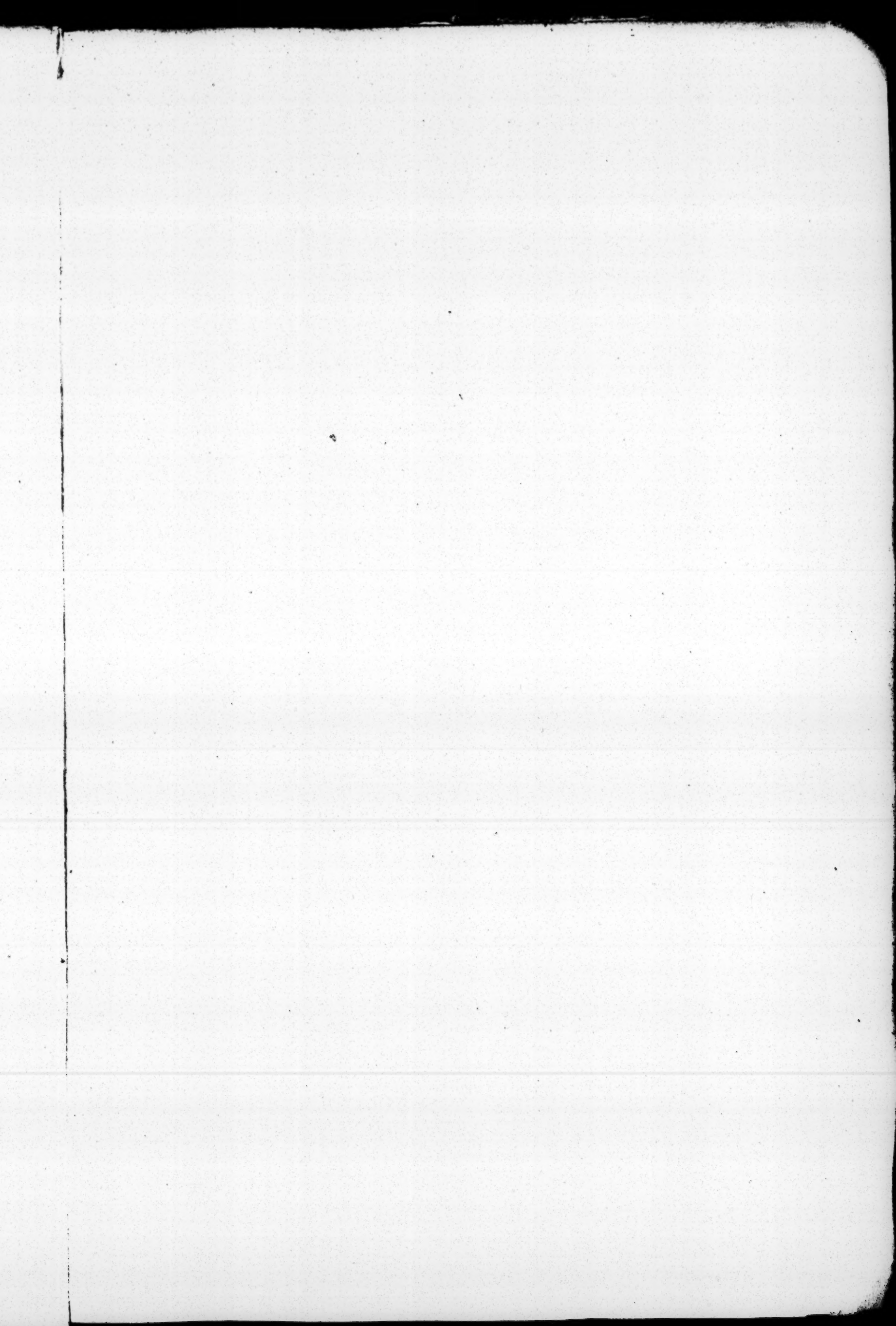
William Robert Reid

L. C. 427.

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Soul-Convincing, Di-
recting and Comforting
Truths ; clearly deduced
from diverse select Texts of holy
Scripture , and practically im-
proved , both for Conviction
and Consolation.

B E I N G

A brief Summary of several Sermons preach-
ed at large , by the deceased , faithful and pious Servant
of Jesus Christ, M. Rodg Brierly, Minister of the Gospel
in his publick Ministry at Grindleton, in Craven; in
the time of a little liberty granted to him , after his
sufferings for the Truth : And being thrust
from his Ministry in Lancashire.

Matth. 11. 25, 26. *I thank thee O Father , Lord of Heaven and
Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and pru-
dent, and hast revealed them unto Babes ; Even so Father , for so
it seemed good in thy sight.*

Printed for James Brown , Book-seller in Glasgow : And to be
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An Epistle to the

R E A D E R.

Christian Reader, concerning Roger Breiley, the Author of these following Notes of the heads of some several Sermons by him more fully Illustrated in his publick Ministry. I desire to say something to thee of his Life, and Message that he witnessed: As also to give thee an account of the Ground and Rise of this word Grinlitionisme, by which the men of the world, as adverse parties styled his Followers. Concerning his Life and Conversation therein, it was as became the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and comely in the eyes of the Sons and Daughters of Sion, and beautiful in the Streets of that Citie, that his adversaries could lay no shame thereon. As for his Message, that was given him for to declare to the world, it was mighty and piercing, to the laying open in the very Heart and Conscience of man the most secret and hidden things of dishonisty, though never so closely infolded in the deepest mystery of iniquitie, so as many, yea, and many that stood fenced in the Field, with the weapons of their own self-righteousness in the flesh, in answer to the old Covenant, fell wounded to the very ground, and were found to be of Sinners, the chiefest. And to this I bear record, such was the Penetrating Power of God in his Ministrati-on, that if thousands were before him under it, in an hour or two discourse, every mans several Condition, whether under Light or Darknesse should have been spoken to, layed open, bare and naked; that every one might truly have confessed in their several conditions, that the word was spoken to them in particular: For what was done and acted in every mans heart and spirit, was there openly related and revealed, that all might read their seven-fold abominations.

(So that in a word, for much more might be related) none either in their Gentilish Nature, nor in their self on-taken Jewish Righteousnesse, nor in any formal way either to Law or Gospel could stand their ground (if they delt truly with themselves) but they fell convicted under his Message; for it was not in word only, but in the Power of God, to take away from Man the whole stay and staff of his own Bread, that every House might be left without inhabitants and man lying desolate might sit in silence upon the ground: where

And many gave out this witnesse, that God was in him of a truth
And not only so, but mighty and powerful was his Ministration
in the evident demonstration of the Holy Ghost, to bear witnesse in
and to the desolate, weary, forlorn, cast out, broken heart of man,
sentenced unto death; of that unchangeable love, in the faithful
Promise of the healing Covenant of God established in, and with
Jesus Christ; against which Sin Death, and Satan, the Father of
lies, should not prevail to blast and curse, but it should arise the
blessing of his own free love to all sit above them in true dominion, by
the witnesse of the Holy Ghost sent down in faithfulness from above, to
comfort the desolate, needy, poor, beggerly heart of man; witting
the Law of Life in his heart, that he shall not dye: but live, where,
whose eye is so opened by the living Faith begotten of the Incorruptible
word, he may Run and Read (in the same place where he Read the
bloody Lynes of Death) the Lynes of Gods unchangeable Love and
Blessing; which is only perfect to cast out of the Conscience and Heart
of man all fear and torment whatsoever: Saying, Rise up, and walk,
for thy sins are forgiven thee. And this his Ministration; being
(as I may say) in the Authority and Power of the living God, and
not as the Ministration that stands only in the Art, wisdom, and E-
loquence of Man; it drew many from all Regions round about, many
miles distant, to wait on his Ministry: Some in good will, hunger-
ing, and thirsting, and travelling in birth under the stroke of
the powerful Word, untill the living Seed were brought forth
by the Spirit of Life in open view in their hearts, to give unto
them that Bread, that should endure unto eternal Life: the taste
whereof made their Spirits to dance for joy, and caused them to tell
it out unto others what they had seen and heard, and handled, that
they also might come and taste of the same love of God: The Echo
and Fame whereof went diversly abroad; some saw and heard the
wonders of God and believed, others, astonished, went away won-
dering, that they could hear no man speak like him; and many o-
thers came to hear and see what cause of such strange reports, seeking
to catch something that they might report also; whereupon mistakes
went abroad, and great contentions stirred up, and jealousies fixed
in mens minds, that some great Heresee, as a monster would appear,
when indeed the living Truth only appaered, to the Children of Truth;
Although the adverse people could not see it, but dayly sought to
match it with some new or old Errors, and Heresees; and when
they

()
they sought accusations from this Authors Doctrine, and could find none; being in the hearing of it silenced, that they had nothing to say against it, yet to shew their minds, what good will they bare to him and his Message, and to those who did embrace it, because they could not well stile them by the name of Brierlists, finding no fault in his Doctrine, they then stiled his Hearers by the name of Gronlitionians, by a name of a Town in Cravan, called Grindleton, where this Author did at that time exercise his Ministry; thinking by his name to render them odious, and brand them for some kind of Sectaries; but they could not tell what sect to parallel them to. Hence, rose the name Grindletonisme, And yet they rested not with this aspersion, but raised persecution against this Author; informing the High Commission against him, who sent their Purseuants to bring him up to York, where he was kept in fast custody a time during their pleasure; and fifty Articles exhibited by his Adversaries into the Court against him; which, when he came to his tryal, not one of them directly proved against him. Whereupon, after a Sermon preached by him at their Cathedral, he was dismissed, and liberty by Bishop Tobias Mathews granted to exercise his Ministry as formerly; who, after much travel and pains in witnessing the glad tidings of Salvation, ended his Natural Life at Burnlaie in Lancashire; after whose Death, these few Head-notes of some of his Sermons came into view, wherein, Christian Reader, if thou minde well, as thou reads, thou may taste the foundamental grounds of Truth, and also perceive the various decipts of thy deceitful heart, and Satans deep temptations unviolated and discovered, to thine and his shame, which thou mayest Read, as followeth.

J. C.

Here followeth a Catologue of the Texts of Scripture that these lines treats of.

- I. **P**hilip. 3. 19. 18. Brethren, be ye followers of me,
and walk so, as you have me for an example,
for many, &c. Page 1.
- II. **M**atth. 11. 25, 26. I thank thee, O Father, Lord
of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things
from the wise and, &c. p. 11.
- III. **M**at. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that are weary
and heavy laden, and I will ease you: Take my
yoke upon you, &c. p. 19.
- IV. **L**uk. 2. 8, 9, 10. And there were in the same coun-
trei Shepherds, abiding in the field, watching
their flocks, &c. p. 27.
- V. **L**uk. 7. 36, 37, 38. And one of the Pharisees desired
that he would eat with him, and Jesus went into the
Pharisees house, &c. p. 38.
- VI. **L**uk. 8. 4. And when much people were gathered to-
gether, and were come out of every City. p. 60.
- VII. **I**sa. 57. 10. Thou hast wearied thy self in the greatness
of thy way, yet saidst not, There is no hope. p. 67.
- VIII. **P**sal. 81. 10, 11. I am the Lord thy God, which
brought thee out of the Land of Egypt: Open thy
mouth wide, and I will. p. 72.
- X. **E**xod. 12. 21, 22. Then Moses called all the Elders
of Israel, and said, Choose you out, and take for
every house a lamb. p. 81.

X. Ma. 28. 14, 15. Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule my people which are in Jerusalem, &c.

P. 87.

XI. Isai. 39. 5. Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord; Behold, the day come, that all that is in thy house, &c.

P. 195.

XII. Mat. 1. 1. The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham; Abraham begat Isaac, &c.

P. 101.

XIII. Heb. 2. 24. Forasmuch as the Children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part with them, that he might through death, &c.

P. 109.

XIV. Luk. 22. 31, 32. And he said unto Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat, but he hath prayed that thy faith fail not, &c.

P. 118.

XV. Dan. 3. 16. 19. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the King Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer, &c.

P. 152.

XVI. Jeremiah 48. 34. 56. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel to thee, O Baruch; thou didest say, Wo is menow, for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, &c.

P. 135.

XVII. Isa. 64. 6. 7. But we are all as an unclean thing; all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a chaffe or a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind hath taken us away.

P. 143.

XVIII. Isa. 65. 2, 3, 4. I was sought of them that asked not after me, I was found of them that sought me not, and I said, Behold me to a nation that called not, &c.

P. 152.

XIX. Isa. 63. 1. Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozra? this that is glorious in his apparel travelling in the greatness, &c.

P. 162.

- XX.** Gen. 22. 14. 15. After these things God tempted Abraham and said, Abraham Abraham, and he said I am here, &c. P. 174.
- XXI.** Isa. 9. 6. 7, 8. For unto us a Child is born and unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, &c. P. 190.
- XXII.** Matthews Chapter, An exposition of some verses of the first Chapter of Matthew: Blessed are the poor in Spirit, shewing the condition of those that are blessed. P. 199.
- XXIII.** Sam. 15. 13. Declaring the double dealing of Saul in the matter of Amalek. And Saul said to Samuel, &c. P. 206.
- XXIV.** 1 Sam. 1. 3. 4, 5. So when the people were come into the Camp the Elders of Israel said, wherefore hath the Lord smitten us &c. P. 208.
- XXV.** Samuel 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. Then the Philistines took the Ark of God and carried it from Eben-ezer, &c. P. 223.
- XXVI.** Mark 14. 27. I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. P. 230.
- XXVII.** Mark 13. 35. Watch ye for ye know not when the master of the house will come, whether at even or at midnight, or, &c. P. 233.

F I N I S.

S E R M O N I.

Philip. 3. 17, 18. Brethren, Be you followers of me, and walk so, as you have us for an example; for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are Enemies to the Crosse of Christ, &c.



Three sorts of People troubled the Church,

1. Dogs, which with open mouth fought against Christ. 2. Evil workers, who professed Christ, and yet walked inordinately.

3. The Circumcision, that cut themselves off from Christ and the Church, by their singular Opinions; and fell into Sects, and would needs joyn Circumcision and fleshly

Righteousnesse with Christ; and so become confident in the flesh. Against which, the Apostle opposeth his own example, who had more to boast of than they; and yet it was nothing to him, in comparison of Christ: So he perswades the Church to hold on forward in the Faith, to the crucifying and laying down of all things, till they come to the Resurrection of the Dead; and in all this Contention, to walk in love: that if some did not understand the truth of the Mystery of Christ, nor yet were brought thereto, yet to proceed on in love by the same Rule, and that God in time would reveal it. Here again he propounds his own, and the Faithful for an Example; that they would walk in that way of Faith toward Christ, and Love amongst themselves; and then he gives them warning of the former, viz. Some in the Church that were Enemies to Christs Crosse; and so describes their course and end. 1. He propounds himself as a Pattern. 2. He warnes them of false Teachers or Brethren: In whom consider, 1. His affection, Of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping. 2. Their course in these particulars; 1. They are Enemies to Christ. 2. Their God is their belly. 3. Their Glory is their Name. 4. Their

4. They mind earthly things. 5. Their End is Damnation. This was no vain boasting, for else-where, he acknowledgeth himself the least of all Saints, but only opposeth himself and the faithful against false Brethren, who only for Glory lived in Envy, sought earthly gain by the Gospel, lived inordinately; and lest that weaklings by them should be drawn to fleshly liberty. But look on them which walk after our example, for we have no confidence in the flesh: We count not our selves perfect, we seek not glory, nor profit, but only the maintenance of the Truth of the Gospel; *viz.* Faith in Christ only, and Love to all men. So that this being their example: Note that,

Faith in Christ, and simple Love to Man is the very Summe of the Gospel, and the Life of all Religion in the heart of Man. Gal. 5. *Faith works by love.* 1 Tim. 1. *The end of the Commandment is love out of a pure heart, a good Conscience, and faith unfeigned; all else ver, 7. is dross and dung.* This is the summe of all Pauls Epistles: This Paul to Tim. calls the spirit of faith love and a sound mind. Thus Paul thanks God, for to the Corinthians the Faith and love to all Saints, &c.

1. For these destroy Self Righteousness, and Self Confidence; and Self Love; which are the poyson of all Religion. *viz.* Self Will; and Self Will; these Adam got, and therefore opposed God.

2. For by Faith he is made a Lord over all things, that will suffer nothing to start up in the Church, and in his Heart, but Christ; and by Love he is servant to all, and plyable; and servant to every one. By the one he is freed with God, and by the other amongst men.

3. By Faith, he that had thought to live in, and by himself through the Law, comes to dye in himself; and to live in, and by another.

4. Nay, all Religion without these is nothing, but meer opinion and conceit, whereby the heart is puffed up, and so not fit for mercy, and also tyed to himself and his own good: Mind the Religion of Christ; was it any thing, but a denying himself, and cleaving to the Father, and giving himself to the Church in love; yea, to his very Enemies? Which Faith and Love is nothing else, but a partaker so of himself, and his own weaknesse, Sin and Death thereby; that he can believe of

trust nothing in himself or the world, but only the Word of God, and in that weakness waits on Christ and meere Mercy, and out of that dislike of himself, and love to that he sees in Christ, loves all, judgeth none but himself.

1. How far are we then from Christs Religion, when all our Religion is, 1. Either in Fire of questions and disputations about this and that Opinion, maintaining of our singular conceits, wherein we seem to excel others in knowledge, whereby true love is drowned quite.

2. Or in some singular conceit of quality and disposition which we conceive in our selves, and thereby grow proud, and despise Christ, and trample mercy under our feet.

3. Or in high roveing conceits of the eternal Deity, Majesty and Power, and Secret Will, and Purpose of God, without Christ; whereby the heart is hardened.

4. Or in the Notion of the Gospel and Christ, and faith without the power thereof, gloriously vaunting of deep Mysteries: But in all these, the thing is wanting, *viz.* an humble, low, believing and loving heart like unto Christ.

1. Thus in all these, man leaves his own heart, and follows his heady opinion; he forsakes Christ, and pleaseth himself with his own qualities: turnes from the word, and follows vain speculations, denyes the Faith, and lives by the flesh.

2. Know then, that whatever would draw thee from Christ and his Truth, is not the Doctrine of God; whatever sets up man, and makes him any thing but a Sinner, is not the doctrine of Christ, but of the Devil and Antichrist, for it deliveth faith.

Pray we then that the Doctrine of the Gospel, even of Faith and Love may be continued pure in the Church; For Mans Will and Reason will gather a thousand Errors out of Gods Truth, *viz.* when it will not be content to become a fool, but will needs comprehend a spiritual Truth, and determine thereof according to its own Principles and Judgement. Then it brings a world of absurdities; for all errors have risen out of the Will of fleshly minded men, for the Spirit leads unto all Truth.

And I fear, there will arise men of perverse minds, to pervert the truth of the Gospel; some to their carnal liberties, some to the establishing of a righteousness and power in man without Christ; bear we the Infirmities of men: But take heed

of false Doctrine in the Church, for this is the worst of all.

And I pray God, that many alive do not see that the Truth of the Gospel be turned into the Myserie of Iniquitie, and a greater Myserie of spiritual wickednesse than yet we have seen; *Sed magna Veritas & praeualet*, Great is the Truth and prevaileth.

4. But the kindly effect of the Gospel is, to establishe these two in the heart of man, viz. to bring all things down in man by the Crosse of Christ, and so lay him low under the feet of all: For the Gospel is a low thing, Faith is a low thing, though mighty in Christ; and Love is a low thing: Therefore all high flowne Chimerical Divinity is the Doctrine of Satan, and not of Christ.

And therefore, if man be brought under the power hereof, then will Christ be precious to him, and his Word will be the Life and Treasure of his Soul, because man hath nothing to stay him in his deep humility but only he: And then will man love a man, because he is a man; and not because he is of my opinion, or good to me, or of my way or lineage; but loves as Christ did, yea, his very Enemies, *As you have us for an example, viz. us in whom you see the Truth of the Gospel to rule, and to walk according to the same, who seek Christs Kingdom, not ours*, So that,

He walks safely, who truly feeling his own weaknesse, and believes man for the Truths sake, and not the Truth for mans sake.

Follow me as I follow Christ; *But many were drawn away by the Error of the wicked*. For man having a good conceit of another, is apt to believe what he saith; for he believes that God is with him, and so falls into odd opinions.

1. Better we should never preach, than that the Gospel should be believed for our sakes. Can we that are nothing but error add to the Truth of God? nay, if God be not with us, and guide us, we shall tell a thousand lies for Truth.

2. But woe be to that man, who becomes by his example a perverter of the Brethren, either for matter of Faith, or Life, or Liberty: It had been better he had never been born. Take heed then how we depend on man: there is one man for all, even the man Christ, *who is the way, the truth and*

the life ; follow him in the way of faith and love, of whom I have told you often ; because of the danger thereof, and mans weaknesse. So that,

Man is apt and weak of himself to be drawn into an evil way of error, and hardly to believe the truth, and stick thereto, 1. For he is blind of understanding, apt to believe any thing that may further his fleshly kingdom, loath to believe any thing that makes for the destruction of it.

1. Hence it follows that we fall into so many by-ways, and by-paths of error, because we think we are able to know, and we strain our wits to comprehend, and seek out a reason of Gods matters, which are only to be believed : For though I cannot see a reason how God brings about his purpose, and righteous will, shall I therefore conclude ; that he is not righteous, and not believe him ; nay, Paul is glad to shut his eyes at that wisdom, Rom. 11. And cryes out, *Oh the height, and depth, and length of the wisdom of God.*

2. Nay, nothing preserves the Truth to man, but the Crosse ; for all things are tryed by the fire, and that reveals it.

3. That we may be guided in the way of Truth, First, depend on no man, nor on the opinion of man. 2. Stick to the Word of the Gospel. 3. Pray instantly in humility, and the Spirit shall lead us into all truth.

And now I tell you weeping : see the loving affection of Paul, First, who wept partly for those men who had forsaken the Truth of the Gospel, and turned to the World. And, 2. Partly for the danger of the Church, So that,

A loving man is truly loving to all, and truly mindeful of the good of the Church, and advantage of Christs Kingdom in all,

1. Paul sought not theirs, but them ; and the care of all the Churches lay upon him.

1. Away then with this partial affection, when men rejoyceth to see others misled, that he may justifie himself ; and away with this judging and not pittying, but hating them, *They are enemies to the Crosse of Christ.*

Men that professe Christ, but deny him in his sufferings ; their minds is not prepared by faith and patience to bear the Crosse, partly in doctrine they denyed it, not understanding that myste-

ry, partly and especially in life; for they lived in sensuality and fleshly pleasures, and yet professed the Gospel. So that; Manie in the Church professe Christ, and the Truth of the Gospel, which deny, and are enemies to the Crosse of Christ, and deny the power of the Gospel.

This is to denie him before men. To the *Jews* and *Gentiles* the Doctrine of the Crosse was foolishnesse. *Paul* when he was called before the Emperor, they all denied him. The false Apostles, *Gal. 6.* strove against *Paul*, and desired to have the Disciples circumcised because they would not suffer persecution. The Lawyer, *Matth. 19.* and the Stony ground.

1. For they would have Christ and the World also, which cannot be.

2. They were never brought to see their own desert, and to justifie God, for then if so, they would bear the Crosse willingly, as in *Micah. 7.* *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.*

3. They turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, and dream only of ease, and peace, and understand not the mystery of the Kingdom, but would make advantage of Christ to the satisfying of the flesh.

Now this Crosse whereto they are enemies, is indeed that sore affliction, whereby man is past ail helps and hope in himself, or the World.

In Christ you see it was, First, *He bare the iniquity of us all,* so to us, when man bears iniquity in daily repentance. 2. *He bare the Fathers wrath,* so we judgement and wrath in our selves. 3. He suffered all indignity and losse of life, so we patiently. And to be enemies hereto is, 1. To put off sin and bear it through hardnesse of heart. 2. To pacifie wrath by self holinesse in our own conceit only. 3. And for the World to keep it alive in our hearts, and cherish it under Christs wings.

1. And how many of us are such, we all believe and like well of the Gospel, and to hear of sitting at Christs right hand, but to drink of his Cup, none hath a minde. It is good believing when we have the Gospel before us, and the World about us, but to suffer want of all *viz.* the Fathers wrath, none like to this. The Child can bear any thing better, we all like Gospel, but we will loose nothing for it, which argues, we have little con-

confidence in the truth thereof, and little joy therein.

2. But we can talk of the Crosse and sufferings, but we talk of it with light and merry hearts, we make but a play-game of it, for we seek not the bitternesse of Christs agony, nor the smart of the Crosse, and so we dally with all truth, we boast, with *Peter*, that we will die with him, *but before the Cock crow, we deny him thrice.*

3. A fearful thing to forsake Christ and his Crosse, so that, it is not so light a thing to be a Christian, which must suffer willingly the spoyling of goods and soul and all, and be a friend of the Cross: Yea, he is the safest whom God keeps under, for hereby is the truth of the Gospel revealed indeed to man.

4. And happy is he that is guided by Christ in this way, and that his eyes are kept waking all night, and feels the terrors of the Almighty, for he is safe from securitie; It is not the dreaming of a power and free-will in man, by use whereof, securitie is prevented: but it is the Crosse of Christ on man, that keeps him waking; for *Peter* and the rest fell a sleep, notwithstanding, Christs warning given to them so often; only because they dreamed of such a power as *Peter* boasted, but not sensible of the Crosse that lyed on Christ. Nay, all errors have sprung in the Church for want of this, for while men were kept within themselves, and their own miserie, their pride was kept under: but when they had lost themselves, and begun to be strong men of knowledge in conceit, then they began to be masters, and run into a thousand opinions from truth, and these are the enemies to Christs Crosse. First, Those that live in ease and pleasure under profession and knowledge of the Gospel, and feed on the World as their dainty dish. Secondly, Those which bear out sin through hardnesse of heart; he bare the sin of all, but these bear it not as a burden, but as a pleasure and delyte: Thirdly, Which put off wrath and judgement, through self-righteousnesse and qualities, and so with Christ bear not the indignation of the Lord: Fourthlie, Which are lifted up in knowledge of Christ, but walk not in that denying, humble, and believing way of Christ: And it is a fearfull thing to stumble at this stone, and to frame a Christ to our selves: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will crush all those to pieces, and bring

bring down their pride (*whose god is their belly.*) Those who were professors and teachers of the Gospel, and yet under pretence thereof served their own lusts and appetites they went talking of Religion, and thereby got good cheare; labour not in their calling, but made advantage of the Gospel, to the satisfying of their lusts: These he gives warning of as enemies. So that, It is a fearful thing, and dangerous in the Church, and to man; when man under knowledge and profession of the Gospel, seeks chiefly the serving of his own lusts, and pleasures of his appetite and not crucified to the world with Christ.

Such *Paul* speaks of, that they served their own bellies and not Christ, and said, *That they turned the grace of God into wantonnesse*, and yet frequented their feasts of love: And others *Peter* shews, that under pretence of long prayers, *spoiled widows houses, and led captive simple women*; These *Paul* commanded, that *seeing they would not work, they should not eat*: They professe that they know God, but in deed deny him, that is, They are filled with knowledge, that Christ is the way of Life in Justification, but they follow the world in their appetite and deny him.

1. For thus, Religion is made but only a cloak to a rotten and fleshly heart, that under it, they may better attain their own desires.

2. Those that have the knowledge of the Gospel without the power thereof, that have learned to know Christ, but not as the truth is in Jesus, they want the power of his death, which is indeed all.

3. These never came in by the right door, the denying of themselves, forsaking all, and taking up the Crosse.

1. And thus doth most of us that professe Christ to be our Lord and King, our life and hope, our joy, and salvation and that besides him, there is none under heaven, and yet none denies him more. We, would enjoy Christ with full bellies, and purses, and so enjoy Christ in the Flesh but Lust; rules over the Spirit. Thus we strive to have Heaven and Earth both, which cannot be; what care and labour to please our bellies? Is not all a man care for his mouth, and yet his desire is not satisfied? this we make sure of to look too; Is not most of thy life time spent in labour about that curious belly of thine, summer and winter night and day, all is but for back and belly, and yet nature is sa

ficd with alitle? And these are still hard-hearted men, had rather the poor perish in the Streets, than they want to satisfie their appetites: For if a man would but spare the tenth penny that he spends idelie, only to please his lust, would it not relieve a Town? Nay, if that vain waste were spared, which man spends on his lusts, only to feed a sort of fat idle hostesses, it would keep the poor of a Paroch. And then if our gairesh women would but spare one Lace and Garde of five, it would cloth them from cold. Well, Christ will be no pattern for these things. But above all, ashamé it is for believers to stoup to this loose god, to live daintily and fair deliciously. How many Martyrs have lyne in prison with bread and water, and yet better hearts? are we enemies to the flesh, and yet pampers it? Is flesh thus crucified with Christ and yet so great a god unto us?

2. Then if the Crosse go not along with the Gospel, it prospers not, but flesh is strong and presseth to be satisfied, and man will not, cannot lay violent hands upon it, but even this must be given of God, that he keep man down, and his lusts and desires under, *viz.* so to see and feel himself, as, 1. That he shall think himself unworthy of any food, or to live. 2. That his minde be so perplexed with want of annother thing, even Christ, that his minde is thereby drawn off all these things.

3. But he that walks orderly with Christ under the Crosse, is pleased with any thing: Brown bread and the Gospel is good fare, not vowing wilfull poverty, but rejoycing in Christ, and all his gifts, yet well contented in the want of them: *whose glory is in their shame*, or will end in shame, *viz.* They seek glory by their Religion and Profession of the Gospel, but this course will bring more shame, then if they had never professed it. They seek glory but it is but a poor portion. So that,

Many in the Church professe the Gospel, that they may gain glory to themselves thereby in the eyes of man, rather than out of simple love, and simpathize of heart with the Gospel.

You seek honour one of another; The Disciples sought who to be greatest. Pharisees took the uppermost rooms, made their Phylactaries broad, and all to be seen of men.

1. For respect is still the aim of all knowledge, and therefore, man labours for knowledge, that he may appear so: this
itching

itching humour setting him a work, rather than his own misery and want.

2. This doth still follow the Gospel, others that professe not, look for no glory this way, and yet this shall end in shame.

1. Is not this apparent, when men speak and talk of Religion, and utter great bumbasted tearmes, and flie and soare above, when God speaks not in them all to be seen and heard: nay, when we preach to please men, we are not the servants of Christ, but when out of love to Christ, and sense of the misery of man, and our own, we pitie man, and make known the will of the Father to them, then we serve Christ.

2. Have not all an aiming and desire of this, man loath to appear Ignorant, but cloaths himself with knowledge: well, Christ sees thy double heart, and his servants feel not the warming power of his Spirit in thee, therefore it shall end in shame, Christ loved the *Publican* better than those.

3. But sure a believing, loving heart walks in shame, which shall be turned to his Glory, for he that seeks Glory shall never have it, and he that seeks it not shall have it, he that truly understands himself never looks for good opinion of any, for look what good opinion a man hath of himself, he looks that all the World should have the like of him.

4. And this shall end in shame; for God will dishonor man at last, *nothing hid, that shall not be made manifest.*

who minde Earthly things, viz. They professe the Spirit, yet their hearts is after the Earth. So that,

He that under Light and Knowledge of the Gospel is carried after the lusts and desires of the Earth, is an enemy to Christ, and a stranger to him.

S E R M O N II.

Matth. II. 25, 26. *I thank thee Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth; that thou hast hid these things from the wise and Prudent, and revealed them to Babes: It is so O Father, because thy good pleasure was such: all things are given unto me of my Father, &c.*

THese words are a part of Christs Sermon to the hard hearted *Jews*, who neither by the austerity of *Johns* Preaching nor Christs Doctrine of Love, would embrace the Gospel and Mystery of Life; nor by the great works that he had done in *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, against whom he threatens heavy woes: Yet in the end gives thanks, that though the wise men of the *Jews* rejected the Truth, being justly blinded; yet it was his good pleasure for to reveal it to poor and ignorant men, even to *Babes*, that his mercy and love might appear.

1. He gives thanks for confounding the wisdom of Man, and revealing it to the Ignorant.

2. A limitation of that knowledge, only to the Power of God in Christ.

3. An Invitation to all poor and desolate souls, with a promise of help.

4. An Exhortation to Patience, in bearing the cros after his example, with a promise of rest therein.

First, He thanks God for confounding the wisdom of the wise, not that he rejoyced in their blindness; but wished rather that all might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth: but he rejoyceth, that seeing fleshly wisdom shuts its eyes against the truth, that yet he reveals it to others, wherein he shewes whole eyes are only open to the truth, *viz.*

He that in conceit of his own wisdom is lifted up above the simplicity of the Gospel, understands the least of the Mystery and Life of the Gospel; but he that lyes low in himself, seeking to be guided by another, shall understand all.

None of the Doctors received his message; *not many wise, Cor. 1. &c. If any man seem to be wise, let him become a fool. Christ choose not the wise Scribes, but poor Fishers to know his Truth.*

1. For the Gospel is not understood by wisdom, but by that Spirit whereby it is revealed to the Faith of a Believer, that is blind in himself, and seeks wisdom from God.

2. Faith only sees things not seen; if they be seen and comprehended by man, they are not of Faith.

3. The Son that's grown wise through pride, casts off the Father; but the little Child walks in his hands.

4. Conceit of Knowledge makes man unteachable, and hard hearted; as a man that sits on high, looks down to the dungeon, can see nothing there: but sitting in the dungeon, looking up, sees light of Sun: So a man, sitting above, and looking down to the Gospel, as a thing under him, sees nothing: But he that sits in darknesse of his own heart, and looks up to the Sun, sees all, waiting still for the Sun to shine. Though man know all the Mysteries of Life to be in Christ; yet without Christ he knows nothing that he dare trust to.

Object. To what end then should Man labour for Knowledge?

Ans. Yes, This condemns not Knowledge, but that a Man should seek it at Christ, and enjoy it in him, *In whom it is hid from the flesh in all the treasures thereof:* But not that man should store it up, thereby to comprehend God; but to know, that when he thinks he knowes all, he knows nothing, as he ought to know.

2. That he may maintain Truth in the Church of God.

3. That he may guide himself wisely and soberly before men.

1. Where then are the wise? where is the *Scribe?* &c. All the wisdom of this World is but foolishnesse; and yet these count the Truth of God foolishnesse: These of all think most basely of the Gospel.

2. Yea, what a fool is *Aristotle* himself, and all humane knowledge in the matter of Jesus Christ.

3. Be content to be counted a fool with the wise of the world. Thou thinks that he is a fool that follows Christ, but he

he knows that thou art a fool that followes the world.

4. Who would think that many wise men should be so ignorant in Christs matters as they are, and that many ignorants should know him.

5. Well worth low and Child like minds, that dare not trust their own wit or strength, but wait upon the Father.

It is so O Father, because thy pleasure was such. Here he shows the ground and prime cause, that Babes, and not Wise Men understand the Gospel: Not any Power or Worth in Man, but the good will of God; which is not only his absolute Will; but *sober love*, the free love and good will of God toward man, without any respect of his worth: so that,

The good will of God, and his good pleasure, is the only cause of all good to man, when man believes it, and becomes subject thereto, James 1. *Of his own good will begat he us. Eph. 1. Our Election is from this ground, God hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world was laid, who hath predestinated us to be adopted in Christ Jesus, according to the good pleasure of his will, not according to our works, but according to his grace he saved us: so he chose Israel. Who can give a reason in himself, why God doth any good to man, but his good will and pleasure.*

1. For its God that moves man, and sets him a working, not man God.

2. Hereby doth he take away all boasting from man, and layes him low, to depend upon another, and live by meer grace.

3. For he is absolute Lord over all; no resisting of his Will, to which man is never brought to be subject.

But 1. When he feels nothing but weaknesse, sorrow, bondage and misery; and no power to get out, but lyes under quietly; and commits himself to his good pleasure, in faith, tears and sighs, and groans: This is his case, for now he bears wrath patientlie.

2. And then finding help in God, according to his word, and joy and peace, and freedom he seeth; that it came not by any wit or power in himself, but it was only his good pleasure; so that,

1. Hereby he is enlarged to praise God freely with admiration.

2. And also to believe and wait on that word of Faith, though he

he feel nothing, yet Gods will and pleasure is instead of all to him.

1. Thus from the Doctrine of free mercy, doth the Kingdom of God thrive in man, and grow vigorous: Nothing brings down but this; for want of subjection and believing of this good pleasure of God, man still seeks a cause in himself, as this and that good quality, and so never trusts his good pleasure. Man would still know a reason of his good will, which he will not suffer: For Christ doth not here curiously seek out a reason of the Fathers will, but gives thanks, that God hath revealed it by the Gospel: To teach us, that we do not rashly presume to search his Counsels, but wait upon his good pleasure in his word.

2. What place then hath free Will, which depends only on Gods good pleasure, and not on thy right use of free will. For there is no more willingnesse in thee, than in others that never obeyed the truth; but it was only his good pleasure to thee. For by nature, Man fights against God, and would have refused any way, rather than this; and loath to commit himself to his good pleasure, but still would have a hand in his own safety and so share in the glory. But Christ takes all boasting away that Faith may live, and Man thereby: that Gods pleasure may stand, and Man subject thereto, that his grace may be communicated, and Man praise his goodnesse.

But this Doctrine of free will destroyes Faith, sets his pleasure aside, and binds God: lifts up man in pride and presumption, and makes him secure in a few faint endeavours of his own.

3. But the only bed of rest in all things is this, as Chemnitz saith, *That against this scandal of refusing Gospel, we lift up our thoughts to the good pleasure of God, and there rest in subjection so in all things: as,*

First. Wants thou Comfort and Peace of Conscience? doth God withhold the feeling of his Love from thee? Thou wonderst what is the cause, nay, say, *Even so, O Father; because it is thy good pleasure to bring me down.*

2. Art thou troubled with a worldly husband, a froward wife, untoward Children; say, *Even so, O Father, It is thy good pleasure.*

3. A

3. Art thou weak and sickly, say, It is even so *thy pleasure*, to keep under my Lust, and Pride, and Worldly affections.

4. Seest thou Iniquitie to abound, and Gospel despised, say so, *Father, its thy pleasure*.

5. Art thou Persecuted, and the Enemy prevails over thee, say, *Father, its thy pleasure*.

This is the continuall exercise under the Crosse, in patience not to fret, and lust and strive, seing the will of the Father orders all things, we would still have our own pleasure done, and strive for our own wills; but this is our woe.

Nay, and herein is our happinesse, that it is his good will toward all little ones that are subject as Children, his Will and Rod shall rule and crush the stoutest, even Pharaoh himself, but the meek and lowely shall find his good will towards them, that he will turn their enemies to be their friends, &c.

This good will of God is not to be comprehended by man, for it rests in the Word of God, & there to be made known in time, and only to be believed. For all the works of God, are never known till they be wrought, only to be believed before. For to Reason, manie times God seems to be a severe Tyrant, nay his Word a Fable, which speaks of great priviledges, and they seem in their own sense to be forsaken in affliction, but God gives them a Word that will stand, and his good will shall be revealed in time, in the mean time sit still.

All things are given to me of my Father. Here he sheweth how this good pleasure is conveyed to man, viz. in Christ, for he hath given all things to him; So that, lest you little ones should be disheartned, know that I have all in my power, by a free gift, and come to me, and I will ease you. So that,

God the Father hath given and stored up in Jesus Christ a treasure of all wisdom, goodnesse &c. And whatsoever appertains unto the perfecting of his Kingdom; that in himself, the Father may be glorified, and man made happy.

So by promise, he gave him strength to crush the Serpents Head, and to Abraham, that in him all people should be blessed. Isa. He laid help on him that was mighty, in his birth he was to be called Wonderful Counsellor, &c. And a light to the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel, the deliverer of his people out of prison; to give light to the blind.

He was the Vine that had the sap in him; yea, the treasure of wisdom. Yea, the fulnesse of the God-head; Yea, all Judgment was committed unto him, Yea, in conclusion, all power in Heaven and Earth, and victory over Hell and all Enemies: This was manifested in his Word that was with authoritie; and never man spake like him, even to the World in general: And in his Miracles? hath it been seen, that any man opened the eyes of the blind and raised the dead? This the Father did by an eternal purpose for his Glory, and this hath been done for the good and salvation of man, that man that was not capable by his flesh of wisdom of Gods wayes, yet should have one in flesh like himself: in whom, and by whom, he would convey all things that are good to man, because we cannot ascend to Heaven, therefore we might have a God on Earth.

1. Where then is that power and ability in man, or in any other Creature for guiding or preserving himself, which the wisdom and pride of Man so boasteth off? Hath not the sparrow power to fall without his providence? Then, what power in Man towards this great work. Nay, as there is no power in the Commonwealth, neither for preserving right, nor keeping under wrong, but in the King; and therefore the verie petty Commonwealth; or any Officer, he commands in the Kings Name, and makes Rules by the power of the King; nor no Will, but the Will of the King: So in this Kingdom of Christ, no power but in the King for subduing of rebellious men in the Church by his Word, or rebellious lusts in the heart of man, but the power of this Kingdom. Therefore, the Apostles commanded the evil Spirit by the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. And as he that rules in his own Name is a Traitor, and doth no good; So he that thinks to live and rule by his own power, shall not prevail: This conceit only ariseth out of blind pride, that when God hath shown his power in him, he takes it to himself; and stores it up in conceit: and this out of the strength of Lust that will need have another thing than he gives; or out of a proud opinion that he would believe another truth than his. So that lust and opinion are the two great enemies of Faith: But if thou hast some abilities out of Christ in thy self, What? 1. needs the Faith? to believe in him, or to pray him? 2. Why dost thou not conquer thy Lusts, and free thy self as thou seemest to desire.

2. Whatever then man desires, here he must have it; for it is not elsewhere to be had: whether Peace, Forgiveness, Assurance, Comfort, Rest. Here it is laid up, and given to the needy; he hath alwayes to deal with such, and none else.

3. Happy then he that lives by faith in him, and whose eyes are still towards him, that waits at his Posts, and listens to his Word; let all things else passe, work Righteousness, live holily; but look for life in none but him. And yet how loath is man to attend here, but he would have all in his own keeping, because he would not depend on him; and yet were we then most miserable, if our life depended on our own care and keeping.

For *No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.* Here is his limitation, viz. That none by the wit of man is able to know Me, and Power, and Wisdom, and Mercy, and Truth, and Way of Happiness that's hid in me, but whom the Father doth teach and uphold by his power, but I that know it in him truly; and those to whom I reveal it by my word and spirit, through the crosse and way of death. For it is an unknown way to the world, that by Death should come life, and by sorrow and sufferings, joy and freedom; so that,

No power or possibility in man by the strength of natural wit, to know the good will and pleasure of God, or the Mystery of Christ; so as man shall find life thereby, or certainty therein; but as the Father makes himself known in Christ, by his Word and power of his Spirit, unto the faith of man believing his truth, 1 Cor. 2. *The natural man understandeth not the things of God, Christ saith, I am the light that enlightens all that comes after me. Joh. 1. He is the light of the world. Joh. 1. 4. There is anoynting that teacheth all things. 1 Joh. 5. None can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost.* Though we think, that That Jesus we read of, was the Christ and Saviour; yet the flesh thinks but of him after the flesh: but his mightie Power, his wonderful Truth, unspeakable Love to Man, the bitterness of his Sufferings, the Joy in the Fathers will, the Victory over Hell and Death, the joy at the Fathers right hand; none knowes it, but he that believes it out of blindness and misery.

1. For the Father hath hid the treasures of wisdom in him, hidden them from the world; found, not by curious searching, but by humble crying and believing; and found not in man, but

in Christ, and there to be enjoyed: for he is made our *Wise-
Righteousnesse, Sanctification and Redemption.*

2. *Adam* had thought to have known God in the Creatures, himself, and the evil also without God; but knew no good, God revealed Christ in the promise: So until we be brought to the truth of Christ, to know no good in any thing, but in God, nor no evil in any thing, but in our selves, we know nothing at all; but we seek to see a good in every thing, and in our selves especially; and would see no evil, and so are lifted up; and know nothing as we ought.

3. And this Christ prayes, that his Elect may know that thou art in me, and I in thee; and that thou hast *sent me*: And I speak not of my self, but they are the words of my Father that sent me, *for of myself I can do nothing.*

4. And note, that this great Mystery was revealed after Christ's death: for then he sent the Comforter to lead into all truth, and not till then. Before this, the Disciples had a thousand imaginations of Christ, but now they knew that he was the Son of the Father, and Head of the Church; So we have a world of fancies touching God and Christ, but never know him, until the Crosse reveal him; for till then, we only think him to be such and such, and another thought crosseth that. But the Crosse makes the weaknesse and vanity to appear, and his power to serve; for every mans work shall be revealed by Fire. How wonderful are the blind conceits that man hath of God and Christ; as,

1. When we will needs comprehend God without Christ, his Essence, Properties, Attributes, Eternity, Omnipotence &c. What a foolishnesse is this: to think to compass in our thoughts Omnipotence? &c.

2. Others that frame a knowledge of Christ, in comprehending the Story of his Life and Death, Works, &c. Thus they know him by Relation, as we do other Countries where we have never been; but never walk on foot with him in his death and miserie. None knowes him, whose miserable heart is not delivered from Death by him; who believes his truth above all, then this truth makes him free.

3. We see then, that all Knowledge comes by Faith; suppose a man a Stranger, promise to ransom me (a captive) I believe he will; but I know not that he will, but only wait for
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faith ; nor how he will do it , nor why he will ; but when he makes good his word , then I know his love which he revealed to me and I not able to conceive in my self. So with Christ, he promiseth that he will redeem me , but I know not that he will ; onlie I believe , and wait in miserie : yet by that Faith I am preserved through the Word ; though I feel nothing but death and bondage. Wouldst thou know the Love of God that passeth Knowledge ? wait on Christ by Faith , believing his Word ; and he will reveal the Love of the Father. For though we know not the mind of God, yet , we have the mind of Christ : So that thou must know nothing but in him ; abide in him, and his Word abide in thee , and he will reveal all things unto thee. So that our curious and busie Wit, so hunting to know ; and straining out the Wit to understand , leads to many fancies : But know, that his wayes are insearchable ; but wait and attend , and he will reveal Christ and the Father ; if thou sit under the burden of thine own ignorance , and content for the time to know nothing but thy own vilenesse.

Here we see , that Christ is both God and Man. A Man , In whom the fulnesse of the God-head dwells, to whom all is given that knows the mind of the Father , and reveals it to us. This is the only God on Earth, that mans mind may be fixed here, and not gade abroad ; neither ascend into Heaven , nor descend down into Hell , &c.

Where then is the free will and power of Man, without Christ living in him , and leading into all Truth ; drawing the will of Man to wait on God in subjection ? All else , is but trusting to the Wit of Nature , which is alwayes blind. It followeth in the 28. verse.

S E R M O N III.

Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you ; Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*

Here is his Invitation , upon the former relation of his fulnesse, viz. You see where all help is. If then you want help in any strait that lyes on you as a burden, *Come to me* , viz. to my Word and Promise ; for there he dwells , and *I will ease you* ; So that,

There is no certain way or means to a burdened heart, to free his guilt, ease his burden, or rid him out of the Snare of Satan, but the simple fleeing of the mind all to Christ, in his Word of Truth; and there to abide in life and death.

He was of old ordained to break the Serpents head, prophesied of, to bind up the broken hearted. He was the refuge of *Job* in all his afflictions, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. He was sealed and appointed thereto by the purpose of the Father. This himself witnesseth by word and work, *word, I am come to save the world, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*

By works, How many poor, lame, blind did he help; and he was after to do spiritually; to heal the blind, &c. That afflicted he comforted, as the *Publicane*, *Mary*, &c. And *Paul* found in himself, and taught unto others, *That there is none other Name under Heaven, &c.*

1. For nothing can free the spirit of man but he; for he is the only refuge there; all things else, only ease the flesh.

2. All other things prosper according to his presence, but not according to the power of the Creature.

3. All other things are but miserable comforters, but only for a time, putting off for a time, and forgetting it: but it comes with more violence, like a sore ill healed.

1. And yet how do we in any strait, run to any thing other than this. For first, The World saith, Come to me, and I will relieve thy want: Be diligent, apply thy mind to me, and get me by violence or any way, and I will ease thee: and yet when we run to it with love and confidence, and yet never a whit more or satisfied.

2. The Flesh saith, Come to me, and I will rejoyce thee, lighten thy heart, and put away all thy sorrow; I shall fill thee with mirth and delight, and we follow it: and yet in the midst thereof, the heart is sorrowful.

3. Reason saith, Come to me, and I will guide thee, and thou shalt see Comfort: Look at thy righteousness and holiness, and thy diligence and knowledge of the Word; thou art so good above others: thou hast no reason to be heavy, and yet man is never the better. These are all the Promises of this World.

heart, 4. Nay, saith Christ, But turn thine eyes from them all, and
out of come to me; believe and wait, and I will refresh thy heart, par-
mind from thy sin, preserve thee in trouble, and keep thee in death:
e to sit and this never deceives.

2. And the reason why we come not after so many calls, is, be-
cause we are not weary, or think to find ease else-where; and
so long we never come, viz. till the Word have revealed such a
Redeem misery to man, of which he is now sensible, that all things
purpose cannot remove: For while man's fleshlie hope remains, he
work; doth not respect Christ. Christ hath nothing to do with any, but
on and sinful and miserable man: Therefore, we come not because we
yet shall are not burdened, or but so, as we think; either the World shall
help us, or we shall be able to help our selves.

3. Mans burden may be reduced to four Heads. 1. Temptations
of Satan.

And the 2. Guilt of our own Hearts, and Want of the Fathers Love.

3. Rebellion of the Flesh, and Corruption of Nature.

4. Want and Miserie, and Affliction in the World.

Minde, and we shall see that one of these is alwayes the bur-
den under which we groan: The three first properlie to Belie-
ence, anders, either entring the door of Faith, or straying from the
Faith received.

1. Satans Temptations are a grievous burden and snare, when
comes aghe crosieth by Reason the Truth of God: for so he possessed ma-
ny in Christs time; and now prevails with many also: Some-
thing, times, with strong and black Arguments; vexing with fear,
me, and doubting and distraction, calling the Truth a lye.

2. Guiltinesse of Sin by the Law, lyes heavy urged also by
Satan; filling the Heart with fear and distrust; the conscience
whit earanquie, and the heart not established in Faith; but still hath
an eye to his own unrighteousness; and thinks, if he were more
e thee, holy and righteous, all should be well.

But the remedy is, to accuse thy self still; confesse the Law,
d yet in meet the curle, and bear Indignation: yet turning from these
Arguments of Reason. Tell the Devil, thou never sinned against
ee, and him, but obeyed him; but against Christ: and that he hath ta-
lineffe, ven to himself, that all thy sins are now his, and his righteous-
good, esse thine. Then begins a spark of Faith to arise; laying, O
vy, and that I could believe: these groans are helped by the Spirit;
of the and then comes the feeling of joy and gladnesse.

3. Rebellion of the flesh, is a burden to Believers; when it would do good: Evil is present, drawing unawares to courses, still pricking him forward to tickling Lusts; drawing still to look to the world, and so darkning the light of Christ in him: But see that it be a burden, and whether it be not the strength of thy fleshly will not yet subdued; that it is a burden rather, because thou canst not have thy own will, than because thou canst not have thy will subdued: Like a froward wife which saith, She will be content, and let her husband do what he will; but withall frets and repines, because the husband will not yield; which he must do, or else she will never be quiet. Here not the frowardnesse, but the crossing of her will is the burden: She is not a burden to her self, but her husbands will is a burden to her, and she unto him; so with God. But if it be a burden indeed, no remedie but Christ; That thou lettest see and know that it is thy greatest burden; and not trusting in thy own care, diligence; or watching; nor fighting with fleshly weapons: but lay down all, and wait on him vvho hath power, and by vvhom only sin and lust is crucified.

4. Want, trouble and misery in the World lyes heavy on the flesh. For flesh vvould live in fulnesse, and see somevvhat afore-hand, and it may be thou art in want and persecution even for Christ, no remedie but Christ and the Word of Truth. For here, where thou seest the promise is to any burden vvhatsoever: Therefore, if thou findest sin in thy self, or want of comfort, doth outvvard Crosses, a vvorldly husband, froward vvife, bitter enemies, sickness, and povertie oppresse thee? Sit still, and say vvith confidence, and bind Christ to his vvord. Thou said Lord, thou vvouldst carry avvay sin; crucifie the flesh, bind Satan, bear all my vvweaknesses, stand by, and be accused for me before Counsels: Here I see thou knowest my burden, that these lye heaue on me; I am vvexed to bear them; I believe thy Word, and vvait for thy help.

5. So that it is not because vve are troubled, therefore we think that he vvill ease us, but by trouble being driven to cry out vvith cries and faith; for the trulie burdened heart, is a mourning and believing Heart: and so a tender and broken Heart, that all the World cannot cure. But these are hard; But vve are at ease in *Sion*; not troubled, not vvexed: and therefore we have so little fellowship vvith Christ, because vve have so much fellowship vvith the flesh.

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To

Take my yoke upon you: To live with Christ, then it is not to believe and live in pleasure, ease and wantonnesse of the Flesh, but to bear his burden and yoke heavier than that of Rehoboams; whose little finger was heavier than his Fathers hand. For this is affliction of Spirit, killing of the Flesh, losing of the World, Life and all; and yet the believing heart stayed on God in hope and Faith in his promise, patiently suffering his will, shall find rest therein to his Soul, though he be pinched and killed in the Flesh. So that,

Simple believing in Christ, and walking with him in the patient and willing bearing of his cross and quiet subjection to his will in love, is the only way of peace and rest to mans restless heart, Jer. 1. *This is my burden, and I will bear it.* Lam. 3. *It's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.* Mic. 7. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned. If you will be my Disciples, take up my Crosse and follow me.* Phil. 3. *Let the same minde be in you, that was in Christ; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again.* Nay, he prayed for them, 1 Pet. 1. *If ye suffer wrongfully, and take it patiently, the glory of Christ resteth on you:*

For its not the framing of the World, and all things to our wanton minds; but our minds to Gods will, that's our rest; For when we will one thing, and God wills and sends another; then the heart of man is vexed, because he cannot have his own Will.

2. There is an unavoidable necessitie, that when man begins to believe, and to follow Christ in his Word, the World will crosse him, Satan will tempt him, and God will trye him; which can no way be helped, but by suffering as Christ did.

3. Faith gives a foundation of rest to the heart in Gods Word: As with Christ, who was the Word of the Father; but the Crosse destroyes the Flesh, and keeps Faith in life, that Gods power may be perfected in mans weaknesse.

4. For to a believing heart, the Crosse is no Crosse; and to the unbeliever, peace is no peace: For he hath peace that seeks not peace.

And he that flies the Crosse, shall have the Crosse: For its no Crosse to them because it but weakens and crosseth the Flesh, which he would have crucified: But when man would have Christ, and ease, fullnesse and joy in the World; then it is a Crosse to him.

Now this Yoke must be taken upon us, not vowing with poverty, in solitarienesse: This is but to flie the World to ease, but to bear it quietly, when it is sent of God: Because we believe and know, that it comes to passe by the certayn knowledge of the Father, and so the Flesh grieves at the Crosse, yet the heart imbraceth the Fatherly will freely, and with a willing mind: None bears the Crosse willingly, that seeketh ease in the Flesh.

Now the Crosse and Yoke that Christ bare, was,
 1. The Wrath and Indignation of the Father, and want of feeling his love: *My God why hast thou forsaken me, and alone trode the wine-presse of his wrath:* This is a heavy burden, man must bear this, Mic. 7. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord:* So, when man is so sensible of his own guilt, that he bears patiently the Wrath of God, thinking nothing too much that lights on him, and so waits for mercy; For God layeth this upon man: now he smiles, then he looks upon man as an enemy; all must be borne with Faith, that man may be brought down.

2. The sins and infirmities of the people: They were disobedient, they were rebellious, received not his Doctrine; they continued blind, and unfaithfull, after many miracles: They despised him, and his Doctrine; yea, many fell away, and became enemies to him, and his truth: And yet all this he bore patiently; He mourned for the hardnesse of their hearts, wept over them, he prayed for them. As *Paul* became a Father to all; he bare the care of all the Churches; And so, without fretting and contending, or justifying himself, and judging them, but patiently bearing the evil; proving in due time, that God will grant them repentance. If all do not repent, thou wouldst have them nor, are such as thou expectest; Consider, thou art the same by nature; and what thou art they also, it is by the will of the Father.

3. The oppression of his adversaries, with wrongs, slanders, and persecution, prisonment and banishment; and yet he bare patiently, and prayed for them, though they did all unjustly; and so he suffered for righteousness: He took away life, and all; So that though man be persecuted and reproached, and counted the off-scouring of all things: Yea, to go through good report, and bad report, and

g wilful by all, taking no notice, knowing that God hath sent them
ld to get to curse.

Because 4. Want of worldly riches, and pleasure oft in povertie:
e certain Yea, He had not whereon to lay his head, he had no sumptu-
e Crosse; ous houses, nor rich treasures, but one poor bag in the hand
and with of a thief; for he would not be troubled himself, nor
that seeks trouble no good man with it; he had not his varietie of
disnes, or costly apparel, nor yearly revenues, nor certain
estate: Nay, he had but for the day, yet to believe, and to
nd want be content, its but an easie burden.

e, and he 1. This Doctrine is foolishnesse to the World, which know
s is an none other good but the World: Its hard to perswade a world-
bear the ly heart, that there is so little good, or certainty in the
e of his World, or that there is a freedom in forsaking it; for
d, think they think it impossible for they have nought to trust too
waits for but that: but when man hath another to depend on, he lets
iles, and it go, and looks for supplie from him.

e born in 2. And its little known in the Church: We all professe
the truth of the Gospel, but not learned to suffer with him:
were fro We like an easie, full, joyful Religion well, to mingle Flesh
ne; nay and Spirit; joyn Christ, and Mammon together; but here is never
es: They pure believing: Hence many fall from the Gospel, others
y, and be live in daily vexation, or securitie; having not learned this
s he ban lesson: So that we presume, that we do believe, and shall
earts, and stand, and yet, alace! when the Crosse comes, its a question
ecame al whether we believe or not; As *Peter*.

so, mai 3. So that Christs yoke and Crosse never hurts the Church,
and judg as in the time of the Martyrs, it purified Faith. It is a practical
if at any divinity; it manifests mans weaknesse, Gods power, and truth,
do not a which before man thinks not of, but now he believes and
ects; con feels.

u art and 4. Why then should we fear affliction? why do we grieve
and mourn, and cark, and care? Thou canst not deliver thy
ongs, and Soul, thou frets thy self, and God hath set, that thus and
nishment thus it shall fall out to thee; which he will order, to the good
ough the of all that trust in him. Rest then patiently a while, and the
esse: The deliverance shall be glorious; *Learn of me*.

rsecuted. If you will know the way of rest, hearken not to the Flesh,
ll things pleading for ease; nor to the World pleading for wealth;
and pass nor to your hearts, pleading for joy, and peace in the World;

But

But I will teach you another way, which is foolishnesse the Flesh; death for the present, but life, and freedom ever. So that,

Man comes to know, and walk in the way of life and peace as he is taught by Christ, and in subjection; learns is guided by him, Eph. 4. 18. *But you have not so learned Christ, &c.* he leads unto all truth: He is the Prophet of the Church, and hath all Wisdom, Matth. 5. *It hath said of old, but I say unto you, &c.* And in the new covenant they shall all be taught of Christ, and here, none knows the Father, but the Son.

1. For he only knows the mind of the Father, and is sent into the World to reveal it to man; We know not the mind of God, but we have the mind of Christ.

2. All other handles the Word deceitfully, and is nothing but the teaching of the Serpent, to draw man from God.

3. He hath gone the way himself, others have but seen it in a map.

1. But there are manie false Teachers and Preachers in the World. As Satan preacheth liberty unto sin, the World rich in sin, and in carnal and fleshlie pleasures: But these are not the Doctrine of the Christ.

2. Others will be wise in heavenlie doctrine by fleshlie wisdom; and so think by art, and learning to compass the truth, and so transcend above Christ; and lyes not low with him.

3. Others, teach Christ to be a Law-giver, and so frame a righteousness, in seeming obedience; but knows not the power of his death, and life.

1. As the drunkard, to wallow in pleasure, and live like a beast at the stable: didst thou learn this at Christ?

2. The worldling carking, caring, gathering; didst thou learn that at Christ, who had not his kingdom here?

3. The proud, vain, glorious, that looks for respect; did Christ teach thee that? Who pulls down every high thought.

4. The malicious, striving, contentious man; did Christ teach thee that? Nay, the Doctrine of Christ was. 1. To pull down man, and lay him low; and exalt God, and the power of his truth.

2. To Crosse the World, and stablish Faith, 3. To kill the Flesh, and stablish patience: to destroy Lust, and stablish Love: But we like not this doctrine, it gives no liberty to

Flesh: hereby all false doctrine is detected.

For I am meek and lowly in heart, so should you be; So that, Lowelie, meek-minded men, who are humbled in themselves, and daily judge their own unworthinesse, shall enjoy most rest unto their Souls.

Christ reviled not again, Mat. 5. *Blessed are the meek*: And a meek and quiet Spirit is much set by. He that humbles himself shall be exalted; the whole Gospel runs on this string,

1. For they are fitted to bear all estates.

2. Nothing vexeth man but Pride, and unquietnesse of his own mind: when he looks for this, and that; and strives, cares, and frets, and no rest.

3. He lives by meer mercie, having no good thought of himself.

1. This is not a softnesse of nature, and fretting within.

2 Nor a Pharisaical hanging down the head like a bul-rush, as Isa. 6. 8.

3. Nor a lurking like a dog under a cudgile: But a true understanding of himself, and his own vilenesse, which brings down pride; judgeth himself, and justifie others; apply-
ant mind, readie to suffer all, and passe by them.

S E R M O N I V.

Luke 2. 8, 9, 10. *And there were in the same countrey shepherds abiding in the field, and watching their flocks by night: And the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone about them, and they were sore afraid, &c.*

IN the former verses hath been laid down the birth of Christ, and the manner thereof: According to the propheties gone of him before. Here is laid down the manifestation hereof to the world. It was the greatest message that ever was brought into the World, and the most unliklie to be believed by the World; That a poor infant, born of poor Parents; so disrespected in the World, that they could not be admitted to come into the In, but born in a stable, and laid in a manger; wrapped in a few cloaths: And this now revealed to the poor shepherds in the fields; and by them reported to the men of *Bethlem*: When the Church being then

then in trouble and bondage; looked for some great glorious *Messiah* to come, with great pompe, and power to work deliverance for them; and this must be the man raised up by the power of God, to be the light of *Gentiles*, and the glorie of *Israel*.

We celebrate this Feast, in remembrance of this great victor, and worker of deliverance; Like that of *Purim* in *Esther*. But we consecrate it to *Bacchus*, not to Christ, in Riot and Drunkenesse, in Chambring and Wantonnesse. &c. And not in povertie of Spirit, and humility with Christ; but in pride, and fullnesse of the World. Our joy is not in communion with Christ in his birth, and death; but in liberty to the Flesh, and forgetting of all. O, if Christ should come as he will come, and find us thus: One swilling and drinking; another carding, and dicing; another whoring; All under pretence of love to him: Would he take it well? O no!

Christ was born in a time, and manner, little looked for in the World, and yet in a time of great need: For the Church was now grown to a low ebb: From *Exrahs*, and *Nehemiah's* time, after the second Temple; and one, during the time of the *Maccabees*: They suffered great persecution, and danger, as *Heb. 11*. For now they had no more Prophecies, but a very waiting on the word of Promises; Yea, and according to *Jacobs* Prophecie, the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, and they Tributaries to the *Romans*: And now was the time, though not known to the World, nor expected; now the fullnesse of time being come, Christ is sent: The God dealeth in the Kingdom of Christ. So that,

God hath a time reserved in his own purpose, for deliverance and redemption of man, which he sends not when, and how he lastingly expects; but only to the waited one by lowly Faith, in the word of Truth, which shall come, when man in Flesh and sense sees no reason, and least expects it.

When thou brought again the captivity of *Jacob*, or *on*; we were as them that dream, *Hab. 2*. The vision is in an appointed time, and the prodigal little looked for in tainment.

I. For so God deals in all, that he may be magnified:

eat and to the vicked, he comes in judgment, vwhen they are eating and drinking, and cry, peace, peace: and to believers in mercy, vwhen they cry vvoe, and misery, bondage, and death.

2. He hath given a sure Word of the Prophets to be attended on: For the time he hath in his ovvn povver, and that time is vworth vwaiting on, in Faith and Patience.

3. It is not mans device and vwork that can hasten his time: Not going up to Heaven, nor down to Hell, but abiding in the vvord of truth, being near, even in our hearts.

Thus, vve would all faine hasten the time: As in the Church, there was great expectation; yea, *Abraham* desired to see this day: So vve all vvould know vwhere, vwhen, and how: But the Kingdom of Christ comes not vvith observation.

1. If vve be in miserie; vve think too long, and murmur: Thy desire God sees; but thy Impatience he likes not: He vvill answer thy desires and longing; but he vvill make thee, First, vvilling to bear his Indignation: Yea, and vve no sooner begin to feel the smart of our guilt a little, but vve think Christ should presentlie come; nay, but vve must pay tribute, and be taxed, and feel Repentance and the bitterneffe thereof; and vvait in Faith, and then he shal be born unto us: But man is loath to sit in darknesse and death; and yet the Kingdom of God never comes, but to repenting hearts; *Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.*

2. As also, When vve think, because of this and that qualitie or diligence, or repentance, or humilitie, he should come: Nay, he must not be bound by man, nor to man, by nothing but his ovvn Word; and he vvill thus crosse mans fleshly hopes, vwhen thou thinks thy self the nearest, thou art the farthest off; and vwhen thou findest thy self the farthest off, then thou art the nearest.

And it is a thing to be noted, That Christ came into the World, vwhen the *Jewes* vvvent everie one to his ovvn Citie to be taxed; even vwhen they vvvent to acknowledge their bondage and captivitie under the *Romans*, then was Christ born, vvwhich is also to be observed spiritually, *viz.* When everie man in his own heart lives in bondage, fear, and captivated by Satan, and hath no povver to redeem himself, but confesseth his thraldom and

and lyes under it; then is Christ born unto the heart, for he came to deliver the Captives.

4. As also that the Church was now at a great want, for the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, and no Prophet was left in *Israel*, as *Psal. 74. None to guide or teach them*; nothing left but the word of Promise, which seemed to be void, and God to have forsaken them: And now Christ comes, and is born, so it is written. *And there were Shepherds in the Countrey.*

Here Christs birth is manifested. First obscurelie, to the Shepherds, and these must carry the tydings of great Joy wherein, note that wonderful humility and low estate where Christ appeared to the World, though he was the great Lord of Heaven and Earth: Wherein note Christs way, viz.

That the way of Christ, from the first to the last in accomplishing Mans Redemption, is in povertie, lowlinesse, and deep humilitie of Heart; far separated from the World, and the riches and glory thereof, *Phil. 2. He was equal with God, &c. yet took on him the form of a servant. Isa. 53. He had neither form nor beauty; nothing seen, why we should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and had experience of Infirmities; we hid our faces from him, and esteemed him not: the rich of the world cared not for him: The great Doctors and wise of the world despised him, he sought not his glory, but the good of all; he was still among the poor, and blind, and beggars; and had not whereon to lay his head: his message was carried by fishers and ignorant men.*

1. This was the Wisdom of the Father, that the emine[n]cy of the Parties, nor the wisdom of man should not cause his Gospel to be believed, but the Evidence of the Truth; according to the ancient Prophecies, *He will not have the Gospel to be credited because of Man, but Man for the Gospel.*

2. This he doth, to keep man lowe; that he may see nothing to lift him up in the World, but the word of Truth.

3. And to shew the difference betwixt his Kingdom, and the Kingdom of the World, who only seeks high things, and stands in glorie and outward respects; but his in poverty and misery. Though in that low estate God manifested such a glorie and power, as the World was not capable of: For He was a greater Conquerour than *Cesar, Pompey, or Alexander*; for t

subdued a few Kingdoms, and yet slaves to their own vain
 for glory and lusts; but he overcame the whole World, and Hell
 too, that he cared not a rash for it, and yet but lodged in a
 for the manger. And this is the way that the mind ly low, that it
 left in life not after the World; but so raised by Faith, that it
 left but ramples it under foot: For as the *Heathen* man could say,
 d to have he is valiant, not only who kills Lyons and Bears, and wilde
 is with beasts, but he who overcomes his own passion: so in Christ.

4. For the daily life of man in himself is, repentance, or
 to poor caritie and pride; that he so live in himself, that Sin and the
 at Joy World is a burden to him: Yea, that have still that opinion of
 wherein himself that the World had of Christ; yea, that as he was
 eat Lord counted the greatest sinner of the World by the World, that
 he was ignorant and a deceiver; so that man see and feel the
 in accomns of all men in himself, that he beheld no good in any
 esse, and hing, but in Christ; nor no evil in any thing, but in him-
 world, and self. This keeps him in the manger, and among poor Shep-
 nal with erds.

He hat 1. How far then are we from Christs birth or way, who
 fire him ly seek to be great in the World, which all strive at: it
 d had ex not a manger or a stable that will fit them; but like Lords
 l esteemed the Earth seek preheminance. This poverty of Christ be-
 The great ome a stone to them, whom nothing can please but riches
 t his own nd greatnesse.

and halt 2. Others who imagine themselves to be born of God, be-
 head: bu cause of this and that good quality; and still strain at high
 things, thereby to draw near to God. But this way they are
 arther of; for all Gods people are born in humility, and live
 eminence lowly and humblie even in the stable; that is well pleased with
 e his God ny thing, and so advanced by Gods free gift, for which they
 according raise him.

pel to be 3. What though we be base, and fools in the eyes of the
 World, and that we want the glory thereof; it was so with
 e nothing Christ: nay, it is our freedom if we want it: or having it,
 we not for it: Now, as it was the Fathers will that Christ
 , and thould be born in a Stable, and published by Shepherds; so
 nd stand is his will that thou art poor and despised; but he had a care
 miserie his Son, he will also bring thee through it, though with
 lorie and the pomp; yet with as much ease, and at death, no diffe-
 as a greance; but only that thou with Christ will willingly part with
 for they and he, with much grief and sorrow.

4. We

4. We hear many say, They would have succoured C better, but thou hatest him in his members; What doest thou to them?

The Angel of the Lord came upon them. He came to reveal great mystery, and to shew the truth of all the promises accomplished; none able to do it but an Angel from Heaven, viz. an heavenly messenger: so that,

No understanding of the Mystery of Christ, or seeing truth of the Promise accomplished; but as it is revealed and freely given from above.

Man in nature perceives not the things of God; 1 John 3. There is an anointing from above that teacheth all things; none can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Spirit; though we think that Jesus is the Christ and Saviour: Yet we think but after the flesh; but his wonderful Love, Truth, Power, bitternesse of Sufferings, Victory over Hell and Death, not known by comprehending, but revealed to poor and humble minds from above:

1. For the Father hath hid all wisdom in Christ from the eyes of the world; and it is to be found in him, not in us.

2. Christ prays to the Father to reveal this to them, That they may know, that thou hast sent me.

3. And this was promised of Christ, that after his death he would send a Comforter, that should lead them into all truth.

1. What a world of conceits have we of Christ, and yet we know him not; because we think we know.

1. Some know the Historie of Christ, and moved with natural passions by the consideration of his passion.

2. Some strive to know the Myserie of Christ after the flesh.

2. We see that all knowledge comes by faith, and is revealed from heaven; as a man that promiseth to free me from being a captive: I believe him, but I know not that he will till he reveal his will to me.

3. Where then is the power of man in the use of the universal gift of knowledge to come to know Christ? None know the Son, but the Father; nor the Father, but the Son.

4. Wouldest thou know the wonderful Myserie of Christ? Sit in thy own ignorance, mourning in blindness; and abide in the word of Truth, till the light shine, and thou shalt understand.

red Chrinderstand, though not the mind of God, yet the mind of
 What gochrist.

And they were sore afraid. The glory astonished them, the
 reveal the message brought fear to humble them; so in all: so that,
 smiles no The proper and kindly operation of the whole Word and
 n Heave Message of the Gospel, in the mouth of Christ, is to bring
 seeing t man down: and the foundation of Christs Kingdom is
 is reve laid in fear, to lay man low; that he may be exalted
 in Christ.

To deny our selves, to become fools, and lost; as Paul,
 i Joh. was alive, but when the Law came, I was dead; all our
 ings, a righteousness as filthy rags; the weapons of our warfare are
 uly Ghonighty to bring down: all the whole Scripture to man, as he
 : Yet w man, speaks negatively and basely, onlie exalts Jesus Christ
 ruth, Ps the Law-giver, in thunder to shake the heart of man; the
 d Death Gospel and the Promise made without any respect of any
 and mis righteousness in man; and the power whereby this becomes
 ffectual is from another, and not from our selves. Thus
 m the was Paul brought to his knees.

1. For it ever brings man to fear and weaknesse, before it
 That thing faith, and preserves fear, that he may still rest on
 Christ; for when any Land hath been conquered, First, they
 s death weaken them, and bring them into fear, and then they yield;
 all true doth Christ.

2. For the Word opening to man the Book of his own
 heart, as Acts 2. discovers such a miserie and guilt and weak-
 with nesse, that he cryes, *what should I do?* And as often as it o-
 pens mans mind, it discovers such a dungeon: so that hereby
 after the is driven from himself, and all boasting is taken away.
 But man stores himself with better qualities and better con-
 and is reits, and starts from himself; but if Adams eyes be opened,
 e me, he shall see nothing but nakednesse, and the Crosse shall weare
 t he wip all these fig-leaves.

3. Everie man is grown proud and wise and high in knowledge
 of this gainst Christ; and hath gotten either the world, or knowledge,
 None know righteousness, or something that bears him up: therefore it
 must be a mighty word that must make all these nothing to man,
 of Christd perswade him that the world hath no good in it, nor no
 ; and wisdom; nor in all creatures no life, but in another.
 thou shal 1. But we all pervert this word to our destruction, wher
 understan

will needs comprehend it, but are not comprehended by it; we judge it, and are not judged by it; and so we keep fear: for we are made wise and righteous, according to the form thereof; and becomes men of high thoughts, but not of low minds, and thereby rejects the simplicity of the Gospel. The word known after the flesh, and not believed, lifts up, and hardens more than any thing; but the Word believed, lays down, and layes low in weaknesse; and preserves fear, and makes man nothing, that Christ may be exalted; but we believe not the thousand part of that we know.

2. So that the Word of Truth is a mighty Word, it lays all low before it: none is able to stand before it but Christ, and the holiest *Pharisee*: for this shall judge the World, and lay out all the fictions of man, and all the pride and glory of the World; and shall be a terrible Word to all that believe not, when everie tittle thereof shall be verified on man.

O that! we were all stricken with fear, and sensible of our weaknesse; for as we fear, so we believe. But the Devil hath gotten so many coverings, that he runs from one to another to hide himself from his own heart; Some by the Worlds fulnesse, but that shall vanish: Some by knowledge and righteousness after the Law? and hardened therein; but shall not stand: no, nothing shall remain indeed, but Christ and the Gospel. *Be not afraid*, So that,

Christ and the Gospel only belongs to fearful, and weak hearts, that first see death and danger, and no help in themselves to escape; and sigh, and cry, and pray, and seek deliverance: Then in time, the Angel from God brings the message of the Gospel frees them, that the gates of hell shall not prevail.

It is not possible that the heart of man should be preserved from fear, but by Christ only.

1. All the World is not able to free a worldly heart from fear.
2. All knowledge leaves the heart fearful, though for a time.

All holinesse, and qualities, and sacrifice, not alone cleanse the conscience; but only the blood of Christ, and the remission thereof: And this only shall turn fear unto Faith; so that the Gospel, I fear, belongs but to few of men, where fear is banished, weaknesse is grown strong, and gotten a

again: Sorrow is turned into lightnesse; fighting and praying
 into vaunting and boasting, so that we need not say, we
 be afraid. But O man! look into that dead and rotten heart
 of thine; observe that crooked, faithlesse, and worldly path;
 and be astonished, for the kingdom of Christ was come near thee;
 But seeing thou despisest it, lo we turn to the *Gentiles*; for
 fearless and careless estate is fallen upon all, and under the co-
 ver of Religion, without Religion.

Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, viz. The
 accomplishment of the Promise in the birth of Christ; there-
 fore, seek no shifts to escape; turn hither, and behold great
 joy, and freedom against all sorrows. So that,

The only ground of all joy, and freedom, to a troubled
 heart; is only Christ made known unto man, in the Truth
 of the Gospel.

Paul rejoyced only in the Crosse of Christ, and counted
 all things else but dung; and had no confidence in the Flesh;
 But my joy our rejoycing that I have in Christ Jesus; I die daily;
 all other things died unto him; and being justified by Christ,
 we rejoyce in tribulation: How was the mourning of *Mary*
 turned into peace and joy by Christ, *Isa. They rejoyced as men*
in harvest, and that divides the spoil, and they that sow in
tears, shall reap in joy.

1. For all joy but this, is nothing but mistakings; and like
 a man that laughs in Sleep, for want of understanding in him-
 self; and feeding himself with shadows and tidings that Sa-
 tan brings to him.

2. All other joy, is but rejoicing in the Flesh; He only
 comforts the Spirit, when Flesh mourns.

3. All other joyes ends in sorrow, but this sorrow in joy.
 What is all the joy the World can give to man, even as
 the cracking of Thorns under a pot; Thou art rich and full
 of wealth, yet a carefull heart in the midst thereof. Thou
 joyes to day, and mourns to morrow: So the wanton, what
 cause of joy while his Soul is more fettered, and guilt in-
 creased? Joy passeth, and guilt remaineth; and yet none so
 merrie: Thus Satan hath messengers to rejoyce man, being sad.

1. The World brings tidings of wealth, and honour, &c.
 2. The Flesh of pleasure, joy, and freedom, &c.
 3. Reason, from self-righteousnesse and wisdom, &c.

But Christ, from the love of the Father, that is v
all: Now this never springs, but from mourning in our
like that of *Paul* at his conversion to Christ: So then the
rence of these are,

1. First, One rejoyceth to gain the World; another
freed from it.

2. One to have his own will; and another to lose it

3. One to have all things, and suffer nothing; another
suffer all things, and to have nothing but Christ.

2. We see, that all joy that we conceive, that ariset
of Religion, and not hence; is but a fondation layed in
which will die with him.

But as the Child is merry in his Fathers love, th
he know nothing what shall be done to it; and not be
he is heir, and must be advanced to a great portion;
is with us, not from any quality in our selves, but
nother.

For unto you is born: So that,

Christ truely born unto man, is the only fountai

Life unto man in all distresses. *In the Citie of D*

. Mic. 4. So that nothing shall disannul the truth o

Word of God, nor shake the heart that is f
thereon.

A Saviour, You and the World seemes to be lost and
demned; but behold, here is a Saviour at hand, even a
our sent to you. So that,

The only stay and rest unto the restlesse heart of
is assurance of a Saviour, and confidence of heart in

As *Simeon*, *Mine eyes have seen thy salvation,* and
That we being delivered out of the hand of our ene
&c. And hast raised up for us a mighty Salvation;
he shall save the people from their sins: Such a Saviour
figured in *Moses*, and *Joshua*; And thus prophesied by
Angel, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save my p*

1. For man is a lost and condemned creature, the
of truth hath judged him, his own heart hath given sent
against him; For this hath the Spirit of man sought,
Adams fall; some in the World, some in themselves,
never found, but by Christ. The very Heathens sough
and we make many Saviours, but all faile, save this.

is wort
our selves
the diff
not with us, as it was with the Disciples; we have found
the Lord Christ; We go a seeking, and enquiring, but we
have not found the Lord.

He saves us out of the hand of our enemies, *viz.*

er to b
e it.
another
1. From the guilt of our Souls, and temptations of
Satan.

2. From the corruption of our Nature, and bondage of
corruption.

3. From affliction, and sorrow, and crosses and want.

4. From death, and hell, and judgement at the last.

1. See those miserable Saviours that we frame, as the
world or wisdom, or self-righteousnesse; these we get, but
yet we are in the hand of our enemies; our heart's full of
fear, and death's a terror to us.

2. This Saviour is born and given to none, but condem-
ned men; like a murtherer, that can find no way to escape,
goes to the King, and confesseth, and cryes for mercie; the
King pardons for his own glory, &c.

3. But know that our Salvation stands in another, not
in our selves; though we store our selves, and provide great
and strong arguments against that day, yet all will fail; and only
bearing indignation of the Lord, and committing to free
mercy, must be our salvation.

1. Pardoning of Sin. 2. In preserving the heart in Faith
by the Word, to live and dye with Christ, and go through all
in Patience; not as most, who think themselves the likeliest to
procure a Saviour, is to come with their own righteousness
and holiness, &c. But that we come sinners and condemned,
not bringing righteousness, but to obtain righteousness;
not to offer sacrifice, but to obtain a sacrifice, even Je-
sus Christ.

Christ the Lord, viz. The anointed Lord, who was fi-
gured in that of the *Isralites*, who had the holie Oyle re-
served in the Temple, sanctified by *Moses*; wherewith
their Kings and Priests were anointed. Now the *Rabbins*
say, that this Oyle ceased in the second Temple, till Christ
came; who was to be anointed with the holie Ghost. So that,

God the Father, according to his eternal purpose, hath
anointed Christ to be Lord and King of his Church,
to rule in the heart of man; that God and his power

may be magnified, and man made happie in
*He hath given all judgement to the Son: All power is g
 to me in Heaven and Earth, all things are given to me t
 Father; he hath hid all treasures in him, and hath laid
 on one that's mighty, as Psal. 4. 8.*

This is manifested in his Word, never man spake
 this man, and his miracles; hath it been said, that a
 opened the eyes of one that was born blind: This
 Father did, by an eternal purpose, for the salvation
 man, that seing man could not comprehend Gods purp
 he sent one in our room, to whom he hath given pow
 because that we could not ascend to Heaven, we might h
 God on Earth. His Kingdom is righteousness, and jo
 the Holy Ghost.

1. But we have other Lords; the World rules as L
 and we obey it; the Flesh commands and we are
 ject to it.

2. Where is that power of man whereof he boasts,
 would all be Lords, and rule according to our own will

S E R M O N V.

*Luk. 7. 36, 37, 38. &c. And one of the Pharisees desired th
 would eat with him. And Jesus went into the Pha
 house, and sat down to meat; and behold, a wom
 the City, which was a sinner, &c.*

After that Christ had preached to the People co
 ning *John Baptist*, and that many of the
 ple and *Publicans* believed, and were bapti
 He upbraids the hardness of the *Pharisees*, w
 neither believed *John* nor him, but rejected the T
 and neither believed *John* to see their misery, and repent
 him, that they might receive mercy; but trusted in t
 selves, and kept all Truth off. in the end, he leaves
 with a sharp nip: But wisdom is justified of her Children
 the Children of the Truth, will justify the Truth, th

in him
is given
me to my
aid help.

against themselves ; and though all the world besides should
reject it : so that,

ke like
t a man
his the
ation of
purpose;
power,
ht have a
d joy in

The Children of the Truth do in their hearts justifie and
bear witnesse, and clear the Word of Truth, though it
be to the condemning of themselves, 1 Cor. 14. *They fall
down and say, of a truth Christ is in this man : so though the
Law, Rom. 7. condemned and killed Paul, yet he justified it to
be good holy, just and spiritual, but I am carnal : So Da-
vid, Psal. 51. That thou mayest be justified and clear, &c : So A-
braham justified the promise, which prevailed in him more
than all reason to the contrary.*

as Lord,
are sub.
asts, We
will.

1. For it leaves that impression in the heart, which all the
lyes and shapes of Satan cannot wipe out; though they may
cover and hide: Yet this is more powerful in him than all.

2. For this discovers the Intents of the heart, and strikes
the heart down, and whatever upheld it: against which, man
is not able to stand; but as the guilty felon justifies the sen-
tence of the Judge, so he justifies the righteous sentence of
the Truth.

1. But we see, that thousands which professe Christ, yet
justifieth not his Word: Nay, we judge the Word, and are
not judged by it: We rule and comprehend the Word, and
are not comprehended and ruled by it. We mince the Law and
limite the promise, and all to save our own skins, because we
would not be condemned by the Word.

ed that
Pharisee
woman

2. Yea, such is this wise generation wherein we live, that a
man will now judge and limit God himself; setting a Law to his
Decree, but he is justified to everie believing heart, though
reason not able to comprehend it.

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baptized

Nay, everie man labour to justifie himself rather than God,
and his Truth; and everie thing, on which man depen-
deth; as,

s, which
the Truth
epent; no

1. The worldling labours to justifie the world, and the wayes
thereof in his thoughts.

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eaves them
ldren, vi
h, though
again

2. Another justifies his own qualities of holinesse and righte-
ousnesse.

3. Another, his knowledge and fleshly notions; for they
are the Children of these.

4. Another labours to justifie the Truth, by Arguments of
Reason, against others; but not by faith, against himself: as

a Malefactor justifieth the Law from his own guilt, and because he comprehendeth it.

3. No surer sign of a true man, than to justifie the truth for he sets to his seal, That GOD is true; when man swears in his own heart to the truth of all the Word, that the Law is just, he is guilty; the promise is free, for he is a sinner; when the heart lyes bleeding under the power of the Word, though he feel nothing but death in himself.

4. But we see, how we even deny the Word we professe; we confesse that God will have mercy, and preserve us; and yet we flie to the World and something else; and that repentance and denying of our selves, is the way to Heaven, yet we do not for it; and repent not at all.

The Pharisee desired him to eat with him. He ever was desirous of some advantage for further justifying of himself: so that that under the profession of Love and Religion, there lyes in most men base and filthy ends and respects, whereat they specially aim; which poysons all, and proves their Love and Religion meerly nothing.

All the *Pharisees* guilty of this, as *Saul* and *Simon Magus*, &c.

1. For this is to frame Religion, to serve our selves, not to serve God.

2. This argues an unpurged heart, which turns all means to ill humours.

3. Thus Religion is made a way to cover, but not to cure the World, and our fleshly Lusts and Self-will.

1. And this is plain in experience: What is it that we doth in Religion, but some base end is more powerful in us to produce it, than the simple power of Christs love in his Word. We run after the example of others for credit and approbation, rather than out of simple love for our lost misery. Others talk of Religion, so must we; that we may be known. Others shew love, so must we, that we may be approved. And nothing is said or done, whereat we have not an end in our own: We judge the *Pharisees*, and justifie our selves, yet do the same thing.

2. Hence we see, what a vain and vile thing mans heart is, that he meddles with nothing, but he marris it; that though the thing be good, and the word good: yet in us it is

and not. 3. No simple and hearty Religion indeed, but when man dwells in the simplicity of his own heart, and in the simple truth; else like a huckster, he makes Religion but as a Trade to gain by, either from God or man.

Behold, a woman which was a sinner; both in the eye of the World, and in her self; judged by both, and condemned in her self: So that,

None flies to Christ in deed and truth, nor finds mercy with him, but he that knows and feels himself daily to be a sinner; and through sin, is a lost and helpless creature.

So the Prodigal and Publicane, and *Paul*, Rom. 7. *O wretched man that I am, &c.* and *David*, Psal. 51. 1 Joh. 1. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves.*

1. For then death and weaknesse, wrath and judgement lives in man; and presseth him down, and forceth him to cry and to pray.

2. For else man lyes covered from himself under some fig-leave, and so flies the judgement; that he may preserve his fleshly life alive, &c.

3. This preserves humility, and keeps down pride, and prepares for mercy; for to these only doth the Kingdom of God come. Now this is not a seeing of this, and that action amiss; but that he see and feel the Original fountain and guilt: That though all actions were restrained, yet he feels the Power and Inclination, and sway of his mind against God, and his Truth; that though he be prevented by Gods Power, and shall not taste of Judgement through grace; yet he sees in himself such a power of corruption, and misguided passions; that he cries out for mercy daily, and so is faith daily preserved.

1. But all men strive to appear both before God and themselves to be rich; none would be found sinners: Therefore, when we have missed it in one action, we mend it in the next; that we may appear to be righteous; As,

1. The pure moral honesty among men, though they have no great matters of Religion to boast of; yet even that they offer to God as a Sacrifice for their sin.

2. But the more devote men, they think they have a heart full of good qualities and dispositions, and so cloath themselves

selves therewith, for their repentance, humility, faith, and love, &c. They look at, as good qualities to cover sin withall; but the only quality that Christ loves, is when man comes a sinner to him.

3. May, others indeed have seen themselves sinners, but now righteous and holy, and their repenting dayes are forgotten; so mercy lost, and faith fails. For as it was, sin; that by accident brought Christ into the World, so it is sin in mans heart, that brings a Saviour unto man.

4. Others see in themselves weaknesse and want of Power, that they cannot come to that pitch of knowledge and righteousness that they aim at, which if they could, all would be well; But their rebellious Will, Lust, and Pride and Worldlinesse are hid from them. So that it is the hardest thing to make a man a sinner; and to keep him to a daily sense of his own weaknesse.

2. But sin in man, and mercy in God; infidelity in man; and faith in Christ, layes a right fundation of Religion; and is the dayly continuance of the life of all Religion in man: for thereby, Prayer, humilitie and faith are preserved.

3. So that the word never prospers, but when it lights amongst sinful men: The self-righteous have a covering; yea, and all are grown cunning to put off the evil day, and make a covenant with hell: for no sooner doth sin prick and look out at them, but they have a foreknowledge of a Saviour, and so cure the wound before it be made.

When he heard that Jesus was at meat. She being now brought into misery within her self, and all her sweet pleasures turned into gall and wormwood; she seeks for ease and rest: so it will fall out to all: So that.

That all the pleasures of joy and peace, that man now enjoys in the world and the flesh, will sooner or later be turned into sorrow, want and misery; for death and judgement will lay all in the dust.

Where was the confidence that *Paul* had in the flesh, when he was stricken down in the way to *Damascus*? Where is all the power of *Pharaoh*, *Pompey*, of *Dives*; and wealth of all worldlings, *Luke* 12. Yea, *Pompey* and *Alexander* are laid in the dust, *Luke* 6. *Woe be to you that now laugh, for you shall mourn.* *Isa.* 28. *I will make void your Covenant with death.*

1. For there is a way that seems good, but the issues thereof are death.

2. Else man should insult over God and Christ, and his Word become a lye.

3. Thus doth God make way for his mercy and love, that man may be capable thereof.

4. All joy and life of *Adam* must be destroyed, that Christ may live in us.

1. Woe to the merry deceived worldling, who rejoyceth in his wealth, friends, pleasure and respect; as this woman did: but behold, She is now brought to weeping cheare. So we make our selves merry, and promise many happy dayes; but sure, fear and sorrow, weaknesse and misery must first come, before man be established in Peace and Freedom; for this will not last: We think ease good while it lasts, and so we put off the evil; that we must taste, for we have eaten sowre grapes, and our teeth must be set on edge.

Nay, all our labour and care is to put avway sorrow and fear; and therefore vve gather riches, pover, &c. that vve might sit above, and see no evil: Man vvould do evil, but vvould not see it; rebell, but not take notice. Did ever any rebell against his Prince, but he smarted for it in the end. And though the King, of meer grace would pardon, yet vvvas he a lost man in his ovvn eyes; and his pride vvvas laid down in the dungeon; so vvith us; for sin in man vvill cause smart to man first or last: For,

1. Though vve may put it off through blind presumption, not regarding vvhat shall follow.

2. Or cover our selves, and close up our hearts under the bevvitching of vvorldly profits.

3. Or to drink down sorrow like unto beasts for a vvwhile.

4. Or cover our selves from the Word of Truth, and simplicity of our minds; by our opinions of knowvledge, self-righteousnesse, and the vvorld underneath.

1. Yet either vvill the Lord find us out by his Word, and discover such a vvretchednesse to man, as shall make him cry out, *Woe and alace, that ever I was born! and that my mothers womb had been my grave, or that I had been strangled as soon as I saw the light:* and so cursing his birth day, as *Job*.

2. Or man runing on to his course to the end of his shadow

Shadows, Pleasures, and fools Paradise; at last falls into the Pit, where there is nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth; weeping and howling for the dayes of their vanity that are past, and cannot be recalled: For the guilt of his Soul presseth him down, and cannot be eased; when man is entred into Eternal misery, which shall never be ended; Then alace! shall we see, that Husband, and Wife or Children, were but silly fading Earth, on which we seduced; that Gold and Silver were but Drosse, which we served; and now all taken from us, and our Life too, never to be restored.

2. No misery like to the misery of man; for no creature on earth hath so rebelled against God as he. Did not this woman account any creature happier than she? and yet we sport on selves above all, and feel no smart, because that we are so hardened in the flesh, that the Spirit is lost.

O then! that God would give us hearts to see that misery, that we might mourn in time; and break off sin by repentance. For what a folly is it for a man to run on in a course still, that knowes will bring sorrow? like the thief, who bewitched with present sweet; and feeding himself with hope to escape, becomes hardened, and never believes, nor sees the sorrowing of his hanging day.

4. And that men in the dayes of mirth would think of the time of mourning; every one seeing himself even lying on his death-bed; and bidding farewell to all worldly delights; look for it, even the best. For Christs heavy day was his last day, even before his entrance into glory: so know, there is yet a more heavy day to come, then thou hast hitherto felt.

When she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisees house. Notwithstanding her own unworthinesse, Christs holinesse, the Pharisees hard opinion of her: Yet such was the miserie that she felt, and desire that she had to the Word of Christ; that she saw, that there was nothing that could ease her, but he only so that,

Christ and his Word are only sweet, and desired of troubled hearts and wearied minds; but to others, it is wearisome and little regarded, as Psal. 119. *I had fainted in my affliction, but that thy word stayed me.* The poor receive the Gospel, and the halt and blind came willingly at the voice of the Gospel; and

how

how dear was the Word to the Martyrs in trouble; that one of *Pauls* Epistles was a treasure from hand to hand: And what a wonderful power had it amongst those sick and blind men, that he but spake the Word, and they were made whole.

1. For there is nothing left to a wearie mind that hath any life, but Christ and his Word.

2. For to others, whose present ease and rest it crosseth, it is un-welcome.

3. For none believes it but them; others know it, and talk of it, but the poor and lowly minde only believe it.

1. We may then cry with the Prophet, *Isa. 55. who hath believed our report?* for every heart is filled and fatted, and born up with something; none lyes under his own burden in the Dust; but one hath the World, and lives by it; another a witty and and strong opinion of Faith and Christ; and Christ and his Word not regarded. Do we not delight in any History, and witty discourse, rather than this: do we not believe and cleave to any lie of Satan, though directly opposite; for if he say, we shall die; We say, no, none will believe death, but he that seeks it.

And hence we see, what makes all unprofitable unto man, *viz.* Hardnesse of heart, and presumption, when man can passe over Hell and Death so lightly, as not belonging to him; and so Christ and his Word are a far off kind of thing to him: He can have it, or want it; he had rather want it than a little portion of Wealth; can live merrily in the fullnesse of the World without the Word, than to want it, though he had Christ himself daily to Preach.

2. Well-worth tender and troubled hearts, who like the distressed Orphant, seeks for the Father; knows his own weakness, cries out, Who shall deliver me? waiting daily at the posts of his doors, and sit at Christs feet daily: Christ hath sent out a word into the World, that shall seek peace. O! how joyfull to them, that hear of mercy and pardon, when they thought there was no pardon; and to be guided to the Father. This is dearer than thousands of Worldly fullnesse.

4. This we know in experience, when the minds of men are plunged into reall misery; when there was lesse knowledge, but more simplicity, then the Gospel sufferd violence,

lence; But now, that knowledge hath covered us, we hid our selves under the shadow of our own inventions, and none regards the Word of Christ, Ezek. 7. 19. Matth. 18. 23.

She wept, and stood behind him. So that,

Till Sin and Death become mans daily burden, grace and mercy are never precious. As the Prodigal, till then he cast off the Father, Psal. 5. *Till death entred, he weeps not,*

Till the Law came, Paul is alive; but then he cries, *O wretched man that I am: and mine iniquities are a sore burden,* Matth. 11. 18. *Come unto me that are wearie and heavy laden, &c.*

1. For man by wit and diligence, is able to help any wound, or heal any miserie but this: but the biting of the Serpent, none can cure, but the brasen Serpent.

1. For hereby, Prayer, Faith and Humility is preserved in man; hereby still seeing that his life and safety stands in another.

2. But these dayes are past, and burden is removed, only by a blind foreknowing of the Gospel: For when a man is declared to be miserable, still he hath a voice, saying, Thou shalt not die; and nothing is made known, but he hath a foreknowing of all; Yea, to the imagined, comprehending of God himself; and this hardens more than all else. How comes sin and weaknesse to be lesse burdensome, than before? Is man better in qualitie then before; or lesse sinful? no, man is the same in the Flesh: and if prevented, it is by Grace and Power of Christ, which might make man more sensibly vile.

And yet it is the conceit of all: We think our selves better, wiser, and holier than before, when indeed we are worse; only God is better than before to us; Yea, and because of some qualities, he thinks his sins are not so grievous as others, and because of these he conceives hope; but in this woman, all wrought her woe; no hope in herself, but in another: Where then is the power and free-will of man? Mans power is weaknesse, when I am weak, am I strong.

In that She stood behind him, she washed and kissed his feet. Note the base account she had of herself, as unworthy to come before him. So that,

A repenting heart of man, truly knowing himself; ever hath a base account of himself, what ever God is to him.

Psal. 8. *what is man, &c.* In me dwells no good thing, and yet in Christ he enjoyed much good, Psal. 16. *All my righteousness is nothing; by the grace of God I am that I am:* The Prodigal, *I am unworthy to be called Thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants.*

For there is nothing in man but weaknesse, and baseness; though in the World among men, he be wise and upright; all high thoughts arise out of ignorance and Satans shews.

1. Whence then are all those high thoughts, and justifying our selves, and condemning and censuring one another? and whence is this seeking honour one of another?

And when the Pharisee that bade him; saw it. Leave we the poor woman weeping, washing, kissing, and anointing; and see what that holy man judged thereof, he shewed before a great love to Christ in his entertainment; but see what lurks in his heart; a secret justifying of himself, through pride, and condemning: not only the Woman, but of Christ himself. Wherein note the pride and deceit of mans heart; So that, That in the heart of all men a fountain of pride, and Fleishly deceit lyes lurking under the cover of Religion, whereby man becomes well conceited of himself, when there no cause at all.

This was the sin of the Angels, doting on their own excellency, and of Adam, that would be some body; Yea, Saul would needs justify himself before Samuel: And the Pharisees wholly carried away with this, and the Libertains, 2 Pet. 2. *Spake swelling words of vanity, yet under pretence of long prayers, spoiled widows houses.*

1. For man is unwilling to bear his own shame, and hence he gloseth, and covers and shifts; and as he grows cunning in Religion to hide himself from the Word of God, he goes for currant; when within there is nothing but rottennesse.

For this grows up with goodnesse it self, as Tares with White; For when God bestows any notable blessing or qualitie on man, Satan turns mans eyes to look at it, as an Ornament, or qualitie in man, not as a gift of God, kept in Christ

Christ; and thereby he covers himself in that filthinesse within, and thinks himself some body.

1. Hence ariseth all this covering, and cloaking, and seeking of approbation, that we may be seen of men: for look what a man thinks, and how he judgeth of himself, he would have all men to judge and think the same.

And this sticks fast in all, we judge our selves better then many others; when we, in so judging, are vvorst of all; and yet God and thou knowvs, vvhether all thy care and labour in Religion, be not as vvell to gain respect, as out of the trouble of thine own vilenesse and vweaknesse.

2. Nay, Is there any thing that thou enjoyes, or doth; but there ariseth a conceit vwith it, of a betterness than before? that because of this good qualitie, &c. judgeth vvell; vvhich only shevvs the goodnesse of God to man, and not of man tovwards God; and so it is this proud opinion that marrs all.

3. See vvhath a proud thing man is, that though a begger, yet vvill needs be on horse-back: Hast thou any thing that first, thou hast not received it? and then, vvhy boastest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?

2. Hast thou any thing properly thine, or, in thine own power; but in the hand of another, or canst thou stand one hour thereby.

3. Dost thou not marr every thing that thou meddles withall? as the Word, Prayer, &c. though good, yet in thee nought.

4. Dost thou not dissemble with God, and thy self withall? that when thou Professest to trust God, and seek his glory, dost thou not chiefly trust Wisdom, Righteousnesse, &c. and seekest thy self? when alace! all mans dayes are repenting dayes, *that the Kingdom of God may be daily built up in us.*

4. And the deceits of mans heart are endlesse; For first, when he thinks best of himself, then he is the worst.

2. When it is the World indeed that gives all Life; He hath a cunning shift so to carrie the matter, that Christ shall bear the Name.

3. And, what ever is revealed, and wrought by Christ himself in his, man hath a cunning tricke to shape the like in conceit; only the one hath them in his head, and the other in his heart.

5. It is not Christs Religion that puffs man up, but, that pulls down; that,

Christ may live in him. 1. { One sets up the World and himself, and casts Christ off.
2. { Another, sets up Christ; and casts himself down.

6. So that, truly to know our selves, and not to be beguiled, is a great mystery; not deserved, but by him that knows the secrets of the heart: For with man he goes for current, when God accounts abominable.

He would have known who, and what this *woman had been*: Here together with his pride; in regard of himself, he goes a censuring of others, even of Christ himself; and he judged him, because, according unto their Tradition he did not cast her off; Even indeed, because he was merciful to poor sinners: So that,

He that out of Ignorance hath a good opinion of himself, hath never a good conceit; but a hard censuring of others, and hath pity and compassion on none; he that is not partaker of mercy, never shews mercy to any; but judgeth all, even Christ himself.

Thus the *Pharisees* justified themselves, and condemned all else; not like the *Publican*, Isa. 65. *Stand by, I am holier than thou.* Col. 2. *Touch not, taste not, &c.* And thus they accused Christ; *why eats your Master with Publicans?* therefore not a holy man; The elder Brother of the Prodigal, *I have obeyed thy command; but this my Brother hath wasted all; with whoors and harlots.*

1. For pity and compassion to others ariseth, even out of feeling and knowing of misery and weaknesse in our selves.

2. Comparative righteousness is a great plea, and argument to a rotten heart; nay, man never arrogates any thing to himself, but he judgeth hardly others; Nor judgeth others, but hath an approving of himself, or else; why judgest thou another, when thou doest the same, or a worse thing?

3. For those men live by Sacrifice, and not by mercy; and therefore will have Sacrifice, and not mercie for it: But Christ will have Mercy and not Sacrifice; and Sinners, not Righteous.

And this ariseth out of meer blindnesse in mans self, which hath covered his filthinesse with fig-leaves; and so tyes Religion to some certain qualities and actions; which, who so wants, he judgeth; and sin in man, and mercie in God; which is the fundation of all he feels not.

1. This shews there is more *Pharisees* than *Publicans* in the Church; and more that live by sacrifice, than by mercy; when every one hath a stone to cast at another, preying into everie failing; judging out of their own rotten hearts, that to be a fleshly liberrie, which flows out of meer love; as here in Jesus Christ: Now this we all fall into, in casting off; or secretly judging every one that is not of the same way with us; aggravating the fails and slips of others: But, I demand. What seest thou amiss in them, that is not in thee? thou thinks *Judas* a traitor, and art not thou the same? how often hast thou sold and forsaken Christ for lesse; and caused him to be reproached, and slandered, and crucified; even for the satisfying of some base lust? but thou shalt see, when thou feels either his free mercie, or thiy own misery; that thou wilt judge none.

2. Hence ariseth all Sects and Contentions in the Church, even because every one hath a good opinion of himself, and judgeth all that are not like him; Thus everie Sect condemns others; But *Christ came not to condemn the world, but to save it.*

3. Nay, And this corruption lives in us all; how apt is man to forget himself, and fall upon others; not only to judge their way to be evil, but their very estates with God. If God bring us before his judgement seat, who is able to abide?

4. And thus we judge Christ and his Word, and are not judged by it; we frame it to our own mould, and are not framed by it; as the *Pharisees* judged Christ prophane, because he was not more severe against her; would have had Christ to have been a man of wrath, and judgement; and not a mediator for Sinners.

5. But Christs Religion is a humble, pitiful, and merciful Religion; which indeed is the life of it: For this man had Knowledge; and also Righteousnesse; but no mercy nor love, which proved all to be nothing: *Then said Jesus unto him, Simon, Simon.* Here. he first convinceth the secret hypocrisie of the *Pharisee*: So that,

Though

Though man walk unblemishably in the eyes of all, and religiously and holily in his own eyes; yet, in the highest perfection of man, God hath somewhat to say unto him.

As the young man, *Thou yet lackest one thing*; and to Saul, *what meaneth the bleating of the Sheep*: The Pharisees thought themselves safe, but Christ had still somewhat to say.

1. For the Word of Truth searcheth the secrets of the heart.

2. God judgeth and condemns that which man approves; Yea, he will bring all to judgement, and conclude all under sin; that no flesh may glory; for all mouths must be stopped, and none able to justify himself.

1. So that all our secret hidings and covers will not serve; God hath still something to say to us; though we strive to make all so sure, that he might not accuse us; yet all in vain: for we know that when we have hardened our hearts in security, yet God, either by secret Testimonies of guilt, or by his Word and Truth, is still pulling by the sleeve; and though we slip away, yet he will discover at last.

Two things keeps all men out of Christ, under a kind of cover;

1. Either Beastly, or *Epicurian* securitie; Or,

2. A *Pharisaical* pride; either man is drowned in the World, or Prided in conceits; and hardened in both.

2. But know, God will bring to light every secret thing, though we put off, and care not to meddle with him; though we flatter, and think to please him; though we be righteous, and think to stand before him, yet he hath somewhat to say:

A certain man had two debtors. Here under a Parable, he shews the state of all men in *Adam*, and in *Christ*; The first in the two debtors, that are not able to pay; and so bound over to death and bondage: The second, in free grace, forgiving both; with the effect of love thereupon. *Two debtors, the one owing five hundred pence, the other fifty*: This difference he speaks according to *Simons* judgement; for he justified himself before her, as much as five hundred differs from fifty; though in respect of God, and Original guilt, all are alike: Yet in the eye of the World, and by multiplying actual transgression, increased the guilt and bondage, and so did differ; but both debtors, as all men are: So that,

All men, yea, every Son of *Adam*, through Original sin

and guilt of everie heart, are debtors to God; and bound over to death and destruction; which we must pay, and suffer, unlesse Gods mercy and free grace in Christ do free us, Rom. 3. *we have all sinned and are equally deprived of the glory of God.* Eph. 2. *we are all by nature the children of wrath.* Rom. 13. 2. *There is a law of Sin and Death from which we are freed, only by the Law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus.* Gal. 3. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, &c.* And to Adam, *In the day that thou eats thereof, thou shalt die,* Rom. 14. 1. *The wages of sin is death,* And see it in the Prodigal.

1. The Law of righteousness, which God cannot forsake, requires it; that he that will not live in God, shall have no life; as to Adam: Much more, he that would in his heart pull God out of his Throne, and sit there himself; as Absalom.

2. All men in Adam, are so estranged from God in the ground of their hearts, that they are direct fighters against God in all things; for when we should trust, love, fear and obey him; mans heart forsakes him, and runs to every thing rather.

3. For if there were not a debt and poverty to be suffered, there needed no forgiveness; But we pray daily, *forgive us our debts, O Lord.*

4. Nay, all men know this; and therefore, flie from God and his judgement; as the debtor from his creditor; who, though for the present he is quiet, and hath enough; yet debt and fear lyes on him for future times; because he knows a reckoning day will come; so we: Yea, the very Heathen fear this, that believe the mortalitie of the Soul; and labour by moral righteousness to pay the debt, but all in vain.

1. And know that this debt and death his not this or that misguided action; but the very original springing fountain of rebellion, and guilt in the heart; whence spring all these little streams from that great and filthy Fountain; For all actual sins are properly against men, which may be discharged; As, if I wrong any man, I may restore and make a mends, &c. But by this mans heart fights against God daily; as, when he saith he is just and powerful, and fears not; but thinks to shift it, that he is merciful, and we need it not; but shall live in freedom, and will mend the matter, and pay him his own.

But the believing heart that knows himself, is still a debtor because

because that he feels, that although he guide well, and be prevented from many actual Rebellions, and be partaker of Gods grace, that he shall not taste of judgement; yet, he feels such a spring of Rebellious and mis-guided passions, that he is still a debtor, and daily cries for mercie; and so Repentance and Faith are preserved.

O What a vile and miserable thing is man, and yet dreams of no such thing; Other creatures owe debt to man, and daily live in service and subjection, and pay it; and when they die, all is discharged: But man lives in joy and freedom; and when he dies, all is to pay; *and he cast into utter darknesse, to pay the uttermost farthing.*

2. Whence then is all this pride, and vain boasting? whence is all this Sleepinesse, Security and Peace in the World? whence is this judging and censuring of others? whence is this boasting and high-thoughts of our gifts, and abilities? Is not bondage our daily burden: and death and misery the portion that we look for and fear. Did not *Paul* cry out for deliverance from *the body of this death*; and yet we live in life, and seek no deliverance: Was not he a dead man in himself, and Christ lived in him; and yet we alive to our selves; and Christ dead to us. Therefore, till man believe and know this, not by discourse; but believing the word of Truth, and finding it in himself, he believes nothing at all; and if man believe this, it would lay him as the dust in himself; and dash all toys, and joyes in the World, and make him pitiful to others.

3. But alace! man turns all believing into Feshly knowing, and thereby keeps off his own misery; like a drunken man, that besots himself, that he may ease himself a while of the fear of that debt he cannot pay: For this fore-knowing of man, prevents believing; and ever lifts up man; never pulls him down, makes him righteous in himself, not a sinner; hardens the heart, but never humbles it.

4. But know, that man must know and feel this one day; when it will be too late, when he shall know nothing but misery, like a debtor in the Gaole; who runs his mispent time, must not see his friends, nor walk abroad; but pine to death, and sorrow: so with us at death.

And when they had nothing to pay. Here comes greater misery, viz. That there is left to no man power to free himself; So that,

No power nor possibility in man, by any witty invention, high speculation, or highest holinesse, to free his mind of guilt; to ease his bondage, to flie misery or escape death; but in the sense of all weaknesse and miserie, to cry daily for mercy; and wait for deliverance in another.

We are redeemed not with corruptible things, &c. So the Prodigal; And because there was no power in man, he laid help on one that was mighty among the People; wherefore else came Christ into the World; but, because there was none else able to tread the wine-presse of his wrath?

1. For the wisdom of man is foolishnesse, and his strength weaknesse; his righteousness as a filthy rag; His sacrifice abominable; Israel was not able to help themselves at the Red-Sea,

2 Nay, the promise runs upon such, as have no money, or heavy laden, blind, and poor in Spirit.

3. For Till man have nothing in himself, Christ hath nothing for him.

4. Then is Grace, and God magnified; his Word believed; but, while man hath any possibility in himself, or hope in any creature; mercie is little set by.

1. Away then with all those shifts of man, to put off the evil day; as 1. One with the full World; he will drown all misery in the Earth: but when the Earth shall be taken away, where then is his portion.

2. Another with moral honesty, thinks it will do something.

3. The more devote, offers fat sacrifices of Righteousnesse to purge sin.

4. Another thinks, the time was, when he had nothing; but now he hath somewhat, viz. Faith, Knowledge, Righteousness, &c. And these he thinks will go far; but Repentance is hid from his eyes; and Faith and Mercie shut up.

5. Another takes time, and promiseth to pay hereafter.

6 Another payes old, and takes new; as new fashions in Religion.

Thus man loath to live in weaknesse, and have hold of nothing, but feeds securitie with some hope or other; and looking at himself, hopes that all that is something; and commits not to free mercie. This is the hardest of all.

2. But, when man lives in his own miserie indeed, and sees no way to get out; it brings him to wait for mercie onely:
Like

Like the debtor brought on his knees, commits himself to the mercy of the creditor: So, that indeed, mans weaknesse is his strength; the Crosse his Freedom, Suffering his victorie; and Death his Life.

3. Where then is the power of man, that we so much talk off? Is it in man? a talent given to man to pay his own debt; Nay, to manifest his grace; and it shews how mercy in God is the dayly life of man. and not in himself; and our help in another: Yea, and it magnifies his mercie, that takes a Wife of fornication; that hath no good qualitie; as this Woman; and to such vile and weak Rebels shews favour, that the glory may be his alone.

He forgave them both. Here is the Gospel, and free Grace of God unto miserable man; that had no way to turn him, but falls down, and confesseth the debt; for he exacts nothing at them, nor enters into judgement.

Which of them will love him most. Here he propones the question to convince him in himself. So that,

Till man be convinced in himself, truely to see his own vilenesse and wretchednesse; all truth is but as a shadow without substance.

While the *Pharisees* stood justified in themselves, the Gospel was in vain; Christ came to reprove the World, and so to make way for the Gospel: The Word is profitable to convince and reprove.

1. For the first thing it works, it brings man into himself; as it did this Woman.

2. The Gospel is given to none, but to miserable men; For though others conceive, talk, and dispute of it; only these do believe it.

3. Then man cloaths himself with it, and hides under it; but is not brought under the power of it; to yeild, and lay his hand on his mouth; For he is wise above the Word.

1. And hence it is, that the Word is so lightly passed over; every man is wise to keep off the blow; and though it enters his head, yet he keeps out of his heart; and will not be guilty unlesse for fashion: And so for an lowly, lost mind; we have a thousand wise and secure hearts hardned through knowledge: For we have gotten a foreknowing of all Truth, and keeps off repentance; that when ever the wound of sin is discovered, we

have readie a plaister, by fore-knowing before the wound be made; and so Religion is made a meer matter of Complement: For they see a remedie before the sore.

2. And hence see, that if mans heart believably answer the Word of Truth, it will put all men to silence; none is able to stand before it, or to argue against it; It leaves all men guilty and none righteous; But when man gets upper-hand of the Word, and gets it under his witt; it makes all righteous in conceit, and none finners; as I, by Christ.

1. *Who cares for the sparrows and lillies? doth not the heavenly Father? why then do you care; saying, what shall we eat? &c.* Here all men are guilty, none able to say; his heart is clean.

2. Is Christ the Son of God, and hath Christ done that which never man did? *and no man spake iike this man?* Why then do we not believe? but he believes every lye of Satan: So that out of our own mouth and heart he will judge us.

3. So that one word believed with a simple heart, prevails more than the whole Bible, only known of a hard, and fleshly wise mind.

which will love him most. Or he: to whom he forgave most: So that,

Look what Christ is to man, even the same is man to Christ; and to others, and nothing else.

We love him, because he loved us. First, the love of Christ constraineth us. *For Christ lives in me:* So that he only gives life in all things.

1. For if Christ dwell but in mans fancie, then he hath only a fancie, and an opinion of Love, Righteousnesse, &c. For what ever rules in the mind; all the whole powers run thither.

2. For what a man is, or doth of himself; he is, and doth for himself; and it is meer nothing, though he gave his body to be burned.

3. Thus Christ shews his Power in man, mortifies man to the World, &c. And man as an instrument to do his will; as in everie Officer of the Kingdom, commands by the King.

1. Where then is that power and that wisdom to order mans heart, to rule his passions, to frame his mind to the will of God, to mortifie Lust? Is it in mans good husbandrie; no? It is in mans lying dead in himself; wearie of himself, waiting for help; and finding help in another; is losed at the bottome,
and

and loves Christ and all men; not out of any good qualitie in nature, or mortified mind through his diligence; but that unknown power of the love of God ruling in man, which separates man from himself and his own glorie.

2. But this discovers a main want of lively Religion, and hearty Love; when in every thing a man meddles with, he still hath an eye to himself; his own ends makes him forward: his own power and wisdom guides him; and his own good he looks at: Nay, when Christ hath freed the mind, how soon returns man to himself, and begins the good thereby to himself.

3. And this shews that Christ lives in few; when we see that cankered malice, covetousnesse, pride, envy; and whole brood of lusts fighting in man: See, *He that loves Father or Mother, more than me, &c.*

4. Yea, All mens hearts without Christ are like to this mans; a cold complemental courtesie, esteeming well of Christ; but better of himself, a reserved affection without life; for neither do they stand in need of him, nor feel any goodnesse by him, where he onlie lives not.

She hath much forgiven her, and therefore she loves much. Here is the cause and effect of Christ forgiving her sins, and she loving Christ: so that,

An heart truly troubled and lost in himself, and finding remission of sins in and by Christ; loves and cleaves to him above all things in the world or himself; and all men in and for him.

Paul esteemed nothing but Christ, Phil. 3. 7. Mat. 10. 37. He that loves Father or mother; &c. 1 Cor. 16. 22. He that loves not Christ, let him be Anathema. The disciples being stricken with this Doctrine, forsook all.

1. For there is no life left in any thing to man, either in the world or himself, but only in him; as the Prodigal: What is all gold and riches to an hungry Stomack, in comparison of bread? So, What is all the World to a lost heart in respect of Christ?

2. For nothing is, or can be such a burden, and death to the heart, as sin and guilt: and so, nothing like freedom and life, as forgivenesse. O, how sweet is the voice of a pardon to a condemned man! Now, we all say, that we love Christ: But know, it is the mighty power of God, in the truth of his Word, that
separats

separates man from himself, and all things to Christ alone; for while when any thing else gives hope, delight, joy, ease or peace to man; Christ is not regarded, but in opinion only.

1. For there is a loving of Christ after the flesh; as the Disciples; who could not abide to hear of his departure: so we have fleshly, cold affections to the notions of Christ. but not to be ruled and guided, and live by him only, but will be quarter-masters.

2. And there is a love to the ease, and peace and comfort by him, which we would still have; and sit at his right hand, or for works sake, but to love him; and esteem him for poverty, want, forsaken, and persecution, &c. we like not: Like a heartlesse wife, that loves and obeyes her husband. so long as he pampers hers and keeps her fair and fine: But when he falls into poverty, forsakes him, and takes another; as the rich *Lawyer* and *Dives* did.

So that Christ may well say, *who hath believed our report, or to whom is the power of Christs death effectual?* Seing, all are so knit to the World and our selves, that he and his word is not regarded.

1. The World we love, as Father, Mother, Ease, Fulnesse, &c. and these darken the heart, and gives such a peace to the flesh, that we see not the miserie of our Spirits.

2. We love our own fancies, and thoughts and knowledge, and qualities; and think these will help us, and plead for us.

3. We love our selves, and any thing that may preserve our fleshly Kingdom; but the Kingdom of Christ we cast off.

1. One rather than want his will; another, rather than want the World; another, rather than want ease and life, sets Christ aside: So that we may say? How dwells the love of God in these?

2. But see, Christ is esteemed and loved of none, but miserable and sinful men in themselves; who though he kill them, yet they will love him: these tread all under foot all righteousness, for they see none; all wisdom, the World, Ease and Peace; and Christ only is life unto them: And besides him, all things works their bondage; yea, are wearisome, as all men are to a loving wife, but her husband.

3. Away then with all Religion, where love is wanting; all talking and working, where man doth it to cover his filthinesse; with

with them; Christ is a Judge, and they cannot love him.

4. And none loves Christ, that loves himself; for only such as condemn and judge themselves, esteem of him.

5. And this appears in love to your neighbour, even of mankind, our very enemies; which appears in parting freely with the World; helping the needful, forgiving injuries, covering infirmities of others: suffering willingly; else, how dwells the love of Christ in us?

6. So that it is not love that is the form of Faith, but faith begets love; and love expresseth faith to the World.

Thy sins are forgiven; So that,

Free forgiveness of sins in Christ, to a troubled heart, is life in death; and the door and life of all hearty Religious.

Having forgiven us all our trespasses; This was life in the *Prodigal*, and to the *Publicane*: And this *Paul* acknowledgeth, *Psal.* 32. *This is our blessednesse.*

1. For till then, the Partition-wall stands; and man sits in death in himself, or life in the world only.

2. This opens the door of the Covenant unto man.

3. This is the daily life of man, who though he daily sin; yet God in Christ, freely forgives; and this bursts his heart, and makes it melt into love.

1. But most enter not in at this door, but leap over this; and take for granted, what they never felt nor enjoyed.

2. Others, offer sacrifice to purge sin, and cover with righteousness, wisdom and opinion.

3. But O, What a life is this to a dead man; as a Prisoner condemned, yet obtains pardon through the mercy of a Prince?

And this forgiveness is the free mercy of God, forgiving mans sin, for his own Names sake; not because, they are lesser or fewer; nor because we repent, and now turn; nor because, we are more righteous, or for good qualities.

Who is this that forgiveth sin? Here they begin to judge him again, because he forgiveth sin: they looked that he should have judged and excommunicated her, or set her to keep the Law, and wrought her own peace.

No saith he, *I came to save, and not to judge sinners and lost man*: But this was a Principle that they favoured not; so that, Unbelieving, Strait-hearted, Hard-hearted, and Self-religious Men; though in Wisdom, Righteousness, they excell others

others: yet have they least favour or feeling of repentance and forgiveness, wherein the life of all Religion consists.

They tithe the Mint, Annise and Cummin; they look to the plucking of the ears of Corn on the Sabbath-day: but mercy they are not acquainted with, Mic. *They offer thousands of rams* &c. But to walk humbly with their God, they know not. The first, they urge with all vehemency, but the latter, they never mention.

1. For, what is in mans power, by diligence; by his own ends he obtains: but, what is Gods free gift, as this; he hath not faith to embrace?

2. Do well, and have well; is the Principle all stick to: but resting in Christ, when all things are lost, is a mystery, known to none, but he that hath it.

1. The worldling hath no life, but in the World: and knoweth not, what forgiveness and burden of sin is; So,

2. The *Pharisees* know all, and do all; but forgiveness and faith he favours not; therefore, judgeth this to be carnal liberty.

3. All *Señtaries*, busie themselves about circumstances; but this never medled with.

4. So we talk and think of Religion, and run into many disputes, and circumstances; and over-leap the fundation, viz. the Mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

5. None knows the Power of Religion in deed, but he that hath it; not in himself, as a quality; but in Christ, by faith.

6. All Religion is nothing, where the Fountain is shut; no matter, what we know; if we know not Christ from a troubled heart.

S E R M O N VI.

Luke 8. 4. *And when much people were gathered together, and were come of every Citie; he spake by a Parable: A sower went out to sow his seed, &c.*

After that Christ had cast off the *Pharisee* in the preceding Chapter, and received the Woman; whereby he manifested the freeness of Gods grace, without any respect unto man. Great multitudes flocked to him out of all Cities: and he lets them see by a Parable, that all

heard

hearers prove not Christians. Wherein note, 1. The occasion, much people met him. 2. The Parable it self. 3. The Exposition thereof: *Much people were gathered together.* Partly, by his Miracles; partly, the power of his word; partly, for custome: but all came, and yet after you see, fall off: So that,

The voice of the Gospel, and the publishing of it, gets many friends and followers at the first; which afterwards fall off, and forsake it, Joh. 6. *When all was gone, his disciples began to sink: and he said, Will you also go away.* It was great heart burning to the Priests and Elders, that the whole world went after Christ; and yet at the end, all forsooke him: *and he trode the wine-press alone:* So Paul had many Children and Churches, Gal. 4. *You would have plucked out your own eyes, but they all forsooke him, and turns to the false Apostles; thus beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the Flesh.*

1. For, *Est natura hominum novitatis avida:* but when they have tryed it, and find not that sweet they expected; but that it croseth their lusts and worldly Kingdom, and suits not with their ease and rest; they forsake it.

2. Many embrace and approve of it for company, and moe forsake it for company; it may be the example of many will draw one to it; but the example of one will draw many from it.

3. Though man think, that a Nation is born at once; yet few truly proves good ground, and sticks to the end: for he that endures to the end, is saved.

1. This is too plain in experience, What zeal and forwardnesse, what diligence and care, is now dead and ended in nothing? and though once we wanted nothing but Christ, yet now have forsaken him in the way of his cross; and ease our selves in the world, and our own devices.

So that, the life of the Gospel continues but a time: for after a while, security takes hold of some opinions and heresies of others; and the world takes hold of all: and so the Lord takes it away, and sends it else where.

2. To shew the perverse nature of man, who is never wearie of the world in the ways of the flesh; and yet how soon weary of this.

He spake by a Parable: Not in high and abstruse termes, or wittie and unknown Language, but in plain parables; as of plowing and sowing, of salt, and three pecks of meal, of lost sheep, of debtors and creditors; things well known unto men: and

and cast this simple seed amongst them ; where, see the nature of the Gospel : So that,

That it is plain and low , and simple ; wants nothing, but believing hearts to make it known : yet not understood of any , but such as stand truly in need thereof.

Many great Doctors were ignorant of these Parables : the Parable was plain , but the mysteries was hid. Many wise men conceive truly of it , and defended it ; but only miserable men knew the power of it.

1. For Christ came not to set men at disputing about opinions , but about themselves ; to draw them to believe.

1. So that divinity stands not in curious searching of hidden things , but in plain evidence of truth , to pierce the heart.

2. And hence we see , what good doth all thole disputes of high knowledge , of contemplative men , viz. The greatest Idolaters, that ever was in the Church ; for they frame steps and stairs , to ascend to high Mysteries , and frame a God at the top ; and yet, ly in pride and base lusts : God gives us low and humble hearts , and then a Parable will set ; the Gospel will be precious : and if ever God bring us to see the need of Christ, one simple word of truth will bring more joy , than a thousand witty discourses.

A sower went forth to sow. And this seed is the Word of God, which prospers in some better, in some worse : and Christ therein ranks all men , according to that power the word hath in them ; so that,

Every man is with God , as the word is to him, Joh. 15. *If you abide in me , and my word abide in you, &c.*

Saul cast away the Word of the Lord , therefore , the Lord cast him away : and all the complaints against *Israel* was still, because they hearkned not to my Word ; they disobeyed my Word : and all the Plagues that ever came on man , even from *Adam*, till now is , because our own wills and lusts rules us , and not his Word ; we believe not : but *David* lived thereby. And this is that That frees man , thy Word of Truth.

1. For God and his Word are one , such as his Word is to us ; such is God in every thing ; for not one jote of his Word shall fail.

2. And all the Word is nothing else , but a Declaration of the Fathers will in Christ ; as the Law , that we should have

no Saviour but him, and the Gospel; that he is a perfect Saviour: and all our sin is but a transgression of this Word, by making to our selves in conceit, other Saviours than him. This is the Word that was given to *Adam, Abrahah, &c.* and this is a mighty Word, for by it all things were made and preserved. As with man, how deadly is the Word of a King in wrath; that it hath ever stricken a man with death? and so of mercy. And the sowing of this seed, is nothing else; but the faithful Declaration of Gods Will concerning Man and Christ, that man may see the deceits of Satan by that Word, and so be brought to repentance; and may see the truth of the Word in Christ, that the Kingdom of God may come.

And yet Christ may say, *who hath believed our report*; when we see this seed to perish, and not regarded, but cast off as a fable: We believe and fear the Word of Man; and the Word of a Father prevails with a Son; but God calls and cries, and we regard not: He threatens, and we fear not: He promiseth, and we believe not: But let the World threaten, we fear; or promise, and we rejoice: and so comes man to be of a worldly heart. Doth not the Father cast out the Son that regarded not his Word. Mark, and we shall see, that the whole ear is stopt to this Word; and he is but a dead hearted man: But know, that God hath punished more for this, than all other sins in the World.

1. Woe then to the deaf ear and hard heart of man, that can neither hear, nor believe what God saith; so that to some we see,

1. It is but a fable, and a thing of no account.
2. Others, reverence it; and seek to know, and cover themselves under it.
3. Others, are stricken with the Glory and Majesty thereof; but fleeing to their own Inventions, are cured and flie high above it.
4. Others, are filled and revived, and live by it only; not minding, what the world or the flesh saith; but what Christ saith.

2. So then, that which most opposeth the Devil, is the Word of the Gospel: he can deal with all but this: but this discovers his depths; and draws men out of his Kingdom, And if it live not in man, then Satans Word lives in him; either that of the
Serpent

Serpent to *Adam*, or that of God prevails, and we live thereby.

3. But know, this will be a heavie word one day to those that now cast it off; and prefer their own Lusts before it, when the day comes, that the World and all fails man; and with those *Luke 13. we knock*, &c. He shall say, I gave you my Word, I sent you my Prophets, I told you by them, that you were deceived, and that the World would beguile you: I sent you my Son to make known my will, he walked in the way before you: I gave him Power and Wisdom, to guide you by his Word unto Life: I told you, there was no Saviour to man, but only he.

But this Word you despised, and would not regard; You believed me not, but counted me a lyer; you trusted the World and the Wisdom of the Flesh: I would have performed Life to the uttermost, but you trusted me not; but counted Christ a deceiver: Therefore, now your blood be upon your own heads and now that Word which you have cast away; must judge you For my Word must stand:

4. Happie he then that lives by his Word, and in whom it lives; for all things else alter and change; yet this abides, if man stick to it, Though for the present, we feel no sweet to the Flesh, yet in time, it comforts the Spirit; and yet how often do we call it a lie, and judge the Word, and are not judged by it; either framing it to our own wills, or lifted up above it, or basely sunk down from it, but every way forsaking it; when indeed it is the sure foundation to be waited on, untill the day dawn, and the day star arise, &c.

They by the way side. These are four sorts of men in the Church

The 1. Are like the high way, which is so troden by the daily path of men, that it is hardned; and the Seed can take no root therein: Such are in the Church; So that,

Those in whom the World, and Lusts hath a daily and continual path and custome, becomes so hardned thereby that the Gospel takes little effect with them.

So had *Israel*, *Isa. 28. That they made a mock of the Prophets* so the young Lawyer.

1. For hereby the heart is filled and sore stalled, *Psal. 119. They are as fat as brawn, and regard not thy Law.*

2. Hereby is the ear stopped, and the heart hardned; like a drunkard, that they can hear nor minde nothing.

3. For if that everie passage of the World leave such a wound

as in *David*, what a bondage when it hath a path way and is become the verie Shope; wherein all vanitie are bought and sold.

1. Hence it is that worldly hearts that are flesht therein, do least minde the Word : How hardly do these enter; Like the high way, that is neither fit for Corn nor Grasse : And hence ariseth that damnable carelesnesse under the Gospel : Who hear, and care not, whether there be a God or not : Satan hath these in a fare stay.

2. See what a distemper the World workes in mans mind, that it makes him mindelesse of God and himself too.

3. Hence our verie Preaching and Hearing, even lost labour ; for we cannot shout so loud , but Satan will out-shout us.

4. But well-worth tender hearts, that lye in miserie ; and everie Word of God stricks to the heart.

Lest they should believe. This is Satans end ; So that, Satans main drift to hinder mans Freedom , and undo him ; is ; that he may not believe.

They on the stony ground. Here is the second sort in the Church, in whom the Word hath a certain Work : but note, 1. Effectual, wherein, 1. Their condition is hard and stonie : 2. The effect it had, *They rejoyced and believed for a time.* 3. Their failing, *in time of temptation they fell away.* So that,

That an hard heart, bound and closed up in himself, and his own self-love ; is altogether unfit to receive any good from Christ and his Word, Eph. 4. 17. *Because of the hardnesse of thy heart : So Israel, they erred in heart : because of the hardnesse of their hearts.* Christ was cast out of their Towns, Psal. 81. Psal. 78. *wondrous things did he in the Land of Ham.*

Two things chiefly harden ; self-love, and self-wisdom : For, when man is lifted up in conceit and opinion in doing something to God, and not poor and begerly to receive, he sends the Rich emptie away. For the whole Doctrine of the Gospel, is not what we should do to God ; but what we should receive from him ?

1. For the Gospel is soft, and lowlie, and tender ; and must be sown in tender hearts of Flesh : The Law was written in stone ; but the Gospel in the hearts of Flesh : This hardnesse is nothing, but the closing up of the mind in self-love ; or of the creatures, and depending thereon ; loving, living, and de-
F lighting

lighting therein, so that Mercy in Christ is despised.

1. Hence see, why the Gospel prospers not, *viz.* because of the hardnesse of our Hearts; because, that we neither feel our own misery, nor trust in Gods mercy.

1. Some so confident, and closed up in themselves; that they trample the Word and Christ under foot.

2. Others know and comprehend it, but hard and bound at the bottom.

3. Others dispute and talk of it from a hard heart, no faith, no bowels of mercy; but talk as Lords and Masters of the Scripture: and so nothing but unprofitable sound, and pride and vain glory are the bellows that blows it: and in all these we see;

1. They seek themselves in all things, their own glory and good.

2. They have no Mercy nor Pity for others misery, except partial, in respect of their own way and glory.

3. They censure, judge and condemn all but themselves.

4. The World and the losse thereof sticks deep, but not the Word. For our own misery and mercy in Christ, only break the Heart.

2. We see then whom only the Word profits, *viz.* Tender Hearts, that ly lowe, melting in Misery and Love; these pity others; these are killed and made alive by the Word, as in Christ, who mourned for the Peoples hardnesse, was partaker of mans misery; and yet saw Mercy of the Father.

3. So that all Knowledge, all Passions with a hard heart are nothing; and nothing more hardens than that.

4. And all things prosper, according to the disposition of the Heart, learning &c. are the works of man; but faith and a broken heart, the gift of God only.

This Word may and doth worke many Passions, and a light belief in many; and yet never partaker of Christ therein, as *Ezek.*

33. *They heard and shewed love.* And Herod did many things; for the Knowledge thereof is glorious, and the evidence of the Truth convinceth man, to make him inexcusable. But these are but First, Stirring of natural passions. Second, Or, informing Reason more clearly. Many such Passions we see stirr'd up, and all nothing: So that, fits and passions, lights and easements come and go; but misery in man, and mercy in God

remains

remains ever. And the life of faith, is not any strength or quality in man; but a tender heart, and open ear, to hear and believe Gods Word, and live thereby.

S E R M O N VII.

*Isai. 57. 10. Thou hast wearied thy self in the greatnesse of thy way
Yet saidst not, There is no hope: Thou hast found the life of
thy hand; therefore, thou was not grieved.*

IN this Chapter, the *Prophet* first bewails the losse of the Righteous of *Israel*, which was not laid to heart; but they presumed still of their own strength without God. Then he calls the *Rebellious* to a reckoning, to convince them of their *Idolatry* and carnal confidence; and to see the vanity of their way and their misery, and captivity ensuing.

And all by a *Metaphor* of *Adulterers*, that have forsaken their *Husbands*, that would have been a safe-guard unto them; and joyning themselves unto others, which would be their downfal. As first, that they had joyned themselves to another, than to him: and had made a covenant with them, and fed themselves with beastly pleasures, in satisfying of their Lusts; sometimes covertly, behind the door: Sometimes lifted up in their conceits, as upon a high Mountain.

Then their carnal confidence in the arm of flesh, in going to the King of *Assyria*, and then when he failed, to the King of *Babylon*; and so concludes, they have sought all wayes of wearinesse; and yet returned not to God: Wherein, he shewes,

1. The frowardnesse of Mans Heart, and his many devices to nourish his fleshly hope, and put evil from his thoughts.

2. The ground of all this vain confidence; is, because he find the life of his hands for the present; *therefore not grieved.*

Thou hast wearied or toiled thy self: viz. Sought out all devices and wayes to nourish hope, even unto wearinesse; and yet saw not thy miserie: So that,

All mans toil in the Flesh, wherein he wearies himself, is only to feed his hope of safetie without God; and to keep evil from his heart and eyes: yet all in vain; for evil shall over-take him in the end.

Yea, though man daily see the wearinesse, and vanitie of his own wayes, that they prevaile not to the satisfying of his own lust and desire; yet, he still feeds his hope, and thinks he shall put the evil from his heart: As *Israel*, though they saw they prospered not in their designs, by their fleshlie power; yet still fought to the arm of Flesh and trusted it; *Pharaoh*, though God wearied him with his judgements; yet, he was still hardened against him: The *Pharisees*, though they saw they prevailed not against Christ; yet ceased not to fight against his Kingdom. The Worldling, though he toile in wearinesse, and yet still at a want, yet he cannot cast off care; but hopes to gain satisfaction: And *Balack*, and *Balaam*. Isa. 62. *They will not see, but they shall see.* For man hath more confidence in the World and in the Flesh, than in God; and more ground and reason to believe it, than God; For though the World have failed him a thousand times; yet still he believes it, will help him; But if God seem to defer his help a while, he runs to his old friend *Mammon* again; as *Israel* did to *Egypt*, against *Assiria*: &c. contra: For man is loath to see any evil towards himself, or the down-fall of his Fleshlie Kingdom; though it doth fail in his sense and feeling; yet he holds it up in his conceits and hopes: And so would still have somewhat to look at; that he might believe. For nothing can destroy the hope of man; but God, by the power of his Truth, and sensible Wrath in mans heart: man can shuffle and shift off any thing else.

1. For if guilt be revealed, yet there is hope; For he will mend his course falter *Moses*, and so hope for mercie.

2. If affliction and crosse come, yet he will be more warry and diligent; and so prevent or recover it.

3. If Death come yet he puts it off as long as he can; and saith, While there is yet Life there is hope of mends,

4. For there is such a sure covenant betwixt the World and mans Fleshlie Heart; that if one faill, he runs to another; and if one conceit hold not, he gets another.

1. *Hic labor, hoc opus.* Thus doth the Worlalie heart of man wear out his dayes in wearinesse; and still feeds his vain hopes: How hath the youthful mind wearied himself, in one vanitie after another; that now, they are wearinesse to him; and if the old man were kept to those youthful dally-ance; it would be a burden: And yet, though there was hope in riches; and, how hath the rich Worldling fed his hopes with pulling down and building; and yet he is too short: Nay, there is nothing but is wearinesse in all our wayes, and yet we follow them, as though in the end, we should gain rest: So lothe is man to leave the pursuit of his fleshlie hopes; and so little heart to bear the want thereof; That he will trye the utmost of his strength, before he yeeld.

2. Nay, See the wearie passages man hath in Religion, and yet will not denie himself; he hath gained knowledge, wrought righteounesse, changed his course; and all to beget a Faith: and yet his heart is fearful and distrustful; and thinks by a new device or degree, to gain it; Nay, how often hath God confounded thy self-opinions and conceits; that thou saw it would not serve the turn; and yet, hast set a fresh upon a new one.

3. Nay, how often hath God frustrate the fleshlie conceits of believers, and yet, they have not learned to trust him.

4. Thus the Flesh still deceives, for the witt of man shews him many great wayes of thriving, and all proves wearie; great wayes of believing, and yet proves vain opinion: Man will have hold of something, that his hope may be preserved: Thus is he still bewitched, and will not understand the fear of the Lord.

5. But know, when thou hast wearied thy self, and worn out thy dayes; all thy hopes shall die with thee, and thou shalt see the Truth of that thou wilt not now believe.

1. When the World shall passe away from thee, or thou from it.

2. Thy friends forsake thee, or thou forsake them.

3. Thy Knowledge vanish, and thy conceits fail thee.

4. Death arrest thee , and lay all thy counsels in the dust and no hope of returning , or staying any longer ; no hope to escape the punishment of thy guilty soul : then there will be no hope indeed.

5. This we see , what the life of man is, nothing but a wearying of himself , and feeding his hopes , which end in confusion ; and the greater the way is , and more likelier the project, the more deceived.

1. The way of the *Pharisees* is a great way of holiness , and great conceits arise hence ; but all abominable.

2. The way of fleshly knowledge, and high contemplation ; is a great and seeming way of happiness ; yet, an enemy to the cross of Christ.

3. The way of self-holiness and good qualities , and joyful feelings , feed hope ; that he hopes it will be something, and so is not brought down to say, there is no hope.

6. And here we see , what an evil rests in the heart of man ; like a predominant disease , overcomes all medicines. There is nothing that God doth to him , or that he enjoys , but this evil destroys it both : that evil disposition overcomes it , and the evil of misery falls upon him ; which all his wit, and weary toiling cannot avoid.

1. If he meddle with the Word , there is an evil Infidelity and Lust that eats it out ; and yet, he saith, There is no hope.

2. If he pray ; there is an evil of selfness and pride , that conceives hope from what he doth.

3. If he seek to know and comprehend , yet, there is an evil stubbornness, that he will not yield.

4. If he get the World , there is an evil of guilt and want that destroys his hope and confidence : Nay , there is no evil befalls man , but there is a greater with man which he sees not, but covers all he can ; until God take him from himself , and make him a new man in Christ.

And yet saidst thou not , There is no hope. Yet thou blessedst thyself in new aid , and not brought to seek help at me ; So that ,

Till all mans hope in the flesh be destroyed , the help of God in mercy ; never relieves him.

As with the *Prodigal* , and those in the Ship , *Lord , save us , we perish.* The hope that *David* had in his high mountain, turned

turned away the face of God, and in numbering the People
 72. *He was past hope in himself, that he hoped to see the goodnesse
 of the Lord in the land of the Living. The Pharisees was strong
 in this.*

1. For till then, man never prayes nor seeks to God in earnest; but to the World, and to the Arm of Flesh.

2. For this fights against faith more than all, and nothing so opposite.

3. For this is the proper effect of the truth, to destroy the fleshly hopes in mans heart; and to root it out, that he may seek to another.

4. For till then, man never denies himself, till he be sensible of his real misery; and sees and finds no help in the World, or himself, to avoide it.

1. All the poor ease the World hath, is to nourish his hope; for all the good he hath is nothing, but feeding himself with hopes of more good; and so long as he can keep this conceit alive in his heart, he will not trouble God.

1. See the ground of his hopes. First, One hath the World, or thinks to get it; and therefore, he hopes, he shall not want: But *David* hoped, because God was his Shepherd.

2. Another hath Religion and the World, and therefore he hopes, he shall do well.

3. Another, he hath much light, and many feelings of joy, and he thinks, that all will be well; but none hopes in God.

2. See the endlesse goodnesse of God, that in crossing, blesteth them; and in destroying hope, stablisheth them in himself, when the restless heart is past hope; saying, I have gotten the World, and looked to my wayes: but the Rebellion of my heart is that, I have no hope; Then saith God, If thou hast no hope in the World, nor in thy Self; then hope in Me.

S E R M O N V I I I .

Pfal. 81. 10, 11. I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it: But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would have none of me.

THis Psalm is a Psalm of Praise, ordained to be sung in the Feast of Tabernacles; when from the fifteenth day, till the two and twenty, they feasted in booths; as Levit. 23. To put them in mind, how they dwelt as strangers in Egypt, and were thence delivered; and after forty years in the wilderness; where they dwelt in Tents, daily to be removed at Gods appointment; and they to live by Faith in the Covenant: Shewing the life of man, that though he dwelt in Tents, as Abraham; and have no habitation nor succour, nor power to defend him: yet God helped them in all these straits; wherein,

1. He exhorts them to praise God, with Psalms and Instruments.

2. Reckons up the great benefits of God in their deliverance, both in Egypt and the wilderness; where he gave them a Law and everlasting Testament.

3. Adding the promise, that he will be their God still: if they will trust and fear him: of which,

4. He shews a reason, why they should have none other Gods, viz. because he is their only God, that brought them out of the Land of Egypt; and confirms the promise, that he will be the same still.

5. Then he upbraids them, and shewes; how, notwithstanding all these mercies and truth; they forsake and would not hear him.

6. And so the righteousness of his Judgement in forsaking them, with an aggravation of his judgement; by remembering what they had lost, and might have found. *I am the Lord thy God.* Why shouldest thou have any other God? I am only He; all thy devices have failed, but I was alwayes thy refuge

none could help , when I helped : So that ;

When man hath run through all Inventions and Lusts , yet none but God in Jesus Christ , shall be his rest and stay ; and the heart simply believing , and acknowledging ; this is only happy.

How often doth he urge this in the *Prophets* ? *I am God alone, and beside me , there is no other ; who can measure the Heavens , or gather the Earth into his fist ; who can tell things to come . I only have laid the foundation of the Earth .* The Prodigal would needs have others ; yea , be a God to himself , but was fain to flie hither ; *David*, *Psal.* 73. confesseth , *I have none in heaven but thee .* Thus cryed the People , when *Elias* offered Sacrifice ; *The Lord ; he is God : the Lord , he is God .* *Pauls* righteousness was but drosse ; none but Christ , and him crucified.

1. All other things are but deceivable snares of Satan , and all our toyl and hopes are but our own sorrows ; for to this we must : and he must either be our best rest and friend , or woe to us . These may flatter a while , but he must give life ; or else we die.

2. All things live by him onlie , much more mans Soul , which hath no life in any thing else , as the body hath.

3. This is the whole Law and the Gospel.

4. And God and the Faithful are joyned , and made one in Spirit ; like Father and Child , Husband and Wife ; so that , offer what thou wilt : they cry none , but my Father , & my Husband.

1. But the dark World , which is blind , hath incroached upon Gods Inheritance ; and shut him out of the hearts of men : that they cry , *Any God , but this God ;* So the *Jewes* , any but *Christ ; Barrabas* , or any Murtherer : As,

1. See how the World and the Strength thereof is trusted and relyed on ; that they say with *Israel* , *These are thy Gods , which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt .*

2. See how it is loved , and how it is sought and delighted in.

3. See how the want and the losse thereof is feared , and sorrowed for.

4. Yea , how willingly man serves , and becomes a slave to it ; and yet this great and terrible God , this good , kind and merciful God ; and his sure word and promise not regarded.

2. So that Faith is a simple and single hearted thing ; casts off all power , wisdom , and good of all things , but this only ; and

and like a chaste Wife, cleaves onlie to her husband ; and cryes, out, with *David* against all Satans tamptations :

1. When he offers plentie and fulnesse , nay, none but God and his Christ. 2. When he offers Righteousnesse and Wisdom to look at; nay, none but Christ.

3. When he threatens and drives man to seek to the arm of flesh ; nay, none but God and his power ; yea, when he draws to sin, through lust, yet with *Joseph*, *No, I cannot sin against God.*

So that Faith is only the preservative; As in the Martyrs; who, for this God, forsook Father, Husband, Life, and all to be joynd to this God so good.

For while God was a God to *Israel* , all Nations fled before them, and feared them, no want nor miserie surprised them; but they were filled to the full with all good and satietie ; and while man sits under his shadow simplie, he is safe ; he needs no power of man to support him ; nor riches to fill him : For he hath a joy, peace, and riches, and goodnesse , that the World knows not off , because it knows not him.

3. Let everie man try, who is the Lord and God of his Soul. One saith, O ! riches is the onlie thing ; another, Nay , drunken and merrie companie is the onlic joye ; another, Nay, youthful sports, and pleasures the onlie Heaven; another, Nay, the great *Babel*, that I have built for my honour; another, Nay, but I have none in Heaven, nor in Earth but thee alone.

which brought thee out of the land of Egypt. I helped, when thou wast not able to help thy self ; I freed thee , when thou wast a slave , and I delivered thee when thou wast in danger, and I supplied thy want, when thou was readie to faint, and wilt thou have any other Gods but me ?

For they thought not of it; *Moses*, a weak man to deliver them, What straits were they brought too, & still he freed them; So that, God ever witnesseth his power, and truth, and love to man , in his greatest weaknesse and miserie ; and then doth man ever find God to him the nearest.

What straits was *David* in, in all those bitter complaints; and *rael*, when they wandered in the wildernesse , and had no City to dwell in, Yea, out of the deep have I cryed, and thou helped me. when we were in Egypt, wearie of that bonddage he brought us out. a, the Prodigal , what straits was he in ; and was received to rcie : This is the Type of our great Redemption, manifested in

in the Gospel. 1. For then doth man most purelie believe, and Gods love most apparent. 2. These straits and wants God brings man into; that he may shew man his power, and man may believe him. 3. Then doth he Seal up the truth of his Word and Promise, which man in fulnesse calls a lie.

1. No marvel then, though we have but little appearance of Gods love, when we are readie to brust with fulnesse; and satterie of conceit; sin bites, but we feel it not; we can shift it off, and Christ came onlie to sinful man; want presseth us not; need makes us not run: We live in *Egypt*, but we would live there and fill our bellies, and so seek no deliverance. For we feel no bondage, but know, that this *Pharaoh*, a devil; will root us out at last; as to *Israel*, when they fled to him for help.

2. So that straits and bondage in our selves, and the World, makes God great to appear for, *where sin abounds, there grace also*; O! what straits were the poor Martyrs put too; when all was taken away; Their joy turned into sorrow, peace and freedom into war, and bondage and jeopardie of death everie hour: and yet, How did he deliver them? how did the light break out of that darknesse? *The wicked, who being in honour, Psal. 49. Yet dying, passe from house to grave with woe and welladay: These passed from the prison, to the fire with joy, and with singing; I have seen, I have seen, saith God, the affliction of my people in Egypt. I remember my word to Abraham, Come therefore, and I will send thee to deliver them.*

But he cannot say so to us; I see the desolate and mourning Soul of my people, lying groaning under the bondage of sin; Nay, they are full, rich, and increased with goods, &c. Therefore, I will not cast my Word upon them in vain; For they are not fit subjects for my mercie: A merciful man indeed hath ever an open heart and hand to the needie; So hath God: But the rich he sends emptie away. The deliverance is more urged in the Old Testament than any work that God wrought; both by *Moses*, *Samuel*, and the *Prophets*: And what wonderful Sacraments for remembrance thereof did God institut, as the *Passover* and *Pascal Lamb*, because it was a figure of our eternal redemptiō. To teach,

That the life, joy, & comfort of man is continued still the same way of faith, and promise, and power of God, whereby mans was first freed, that this promise might still live in man heart. *I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.*

1. For man is as weak in himself, and Satan as strong as then; For as God gave life to man, and he only continues it; so he gives grace; and continues it: and thereby we live. His Word endures for ever: *Paul* was received to mercy, through grace; and the same Christ still lived in him. So he often exhorts to continue in grace, and to be grounded and established in grace; and to live by faith.

1. Not as wise unbelieving men, who having tasted of the good word of the Lord, and knowledge of the Mystery of the Gospel; with *Israel*; turn back into *Egypt*; or become wise and righteous in themselves, and so cast off the Covenant. And thus with many, they were sinners; and God received them to mercy: But now, these worke it out; beginning in the Spirit, but ending in the Flesh. Alace! Is sin leſſe burdensome than before, or thou leſſe guilty? or is God more beholden to thee, than formerly? Or haſt thou ſome ſtore whereby thou liveſt, no? as this was the firſt, ſo it muſt be the daily food to live by, even this promiſe, never to depart from us: But that man, ſtill ſeeing and feeling the burden of his rebellious heart; and thence cry and pray, and he ſhall be delivered.

2. It is not preying, prating or talking; or ſoaring high in to the air, or ſtoring Manna, or luſting after Quails; but to attend on his hand who brought us out; and will deliver us, if we be not lifted up above him, nor drawn from him; but with *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, reſt conſtant in his Covenant.

Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. As I have been a God of mercy, ſo I will be ſtill: *Ask; and I will give thee*: renewing the promiſe, that they may ſtill believe, and cleave to him; commanding them, without any condition, on their part: for his promiſe is free, that neither ſin nor weakneſſe; nor failings but open wide, and I will fill all thoſe wants; So that;

There is an endleſſe riches of love, truth and all goodneſſe in God, to ſatiſſie all needs and deſires of man; which ſhall never be wanting to open and praying hearts.

With thee, is the Fountain of life; and in thy light, ſhall we ſee light, *Iſa. 55. Come, buy wine and milk without money &c. and let your ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſſe: Every one that thirſteth, Come; drink of the well of the water of Life, freely. Luk. 2. He fills the hungry with good things. Pſal. 63. David prayed, and he filled his ſoul as with marrow.*

1. For he fills all things with his fulnesse. *with him is fullnesse of joy*; he sends rain to the dry ground; he feeds the ravens; he cloathes the Earth with herbs: all things flow from him; Nay, he hath so filled the treasures of Nature, that there is not nor can be a vocation; much more, there cannot be an empty Soul with whom he had nearer Communion, than with all creatures; But if it be not filled with the Word, or something else, *he fills it*.

2. For all things live by him; take away his power, and man dies; his blessing, and man wants; his wisdom: and man wanders: But our mouths and hearts are straitned; We cry not, unlesse to the World; there we open wide: saying, Give me riches, or I die, &c. So that the mouth of Lust is like the grave, never satisfied: But to him we seek not; we are full, and our hearts are straitned; We are like a man shut up in little ease: where he finds no rest; and the Wall so thick, his cries are not heard; and so none pities him: So we in the World, our hearts are pinched there; and yet the Walls of the World so thick; that the cries of the Spirit is not heard.

When a man wants Bread, how plentifully doth he crye; with an open heart in true necessitie; and yet like sleeping men, we dream of store, and beg not.

1. We are all knowing, wise, and righteous, devote men, but not praying hearts; O! the heart of man, that hath his senses so bound up, and benumbed as with opinion; that he is fallen asleep and prayes not; nor wants nothing, but to satisfie the Flesh; for, if ever the heart were open and cryed indeed, it should be heard.

2. But know, that the time will come, when we shall cry, and call, knock and weep, and not be heard; *Like the foolish Virgins*, and *Israel* here: No, they were wise, and rich, and righteous; and they cryed not.

3. Whatever then straitens the heart towards God, and stops the cries of the Spirit is a work of Satan; though the fairest gift that ever we received: But alace! praying dayes are gone, the time was, when thou went mourning and praying in thy Spirit all the day; and in thy verie dreams and now thy verie prayers are but dreams; and all thy store is but windie emptinesse. Alace! hast thou not as much need of his grace as ever? is not thy pride, and false knowledge as great a snare as ever? was thy wanton sins; yes sure, and as odious to God.

But my people would not hear my voice : Here is his up-braiding of Israel, for their securitie and hardnesse; appearing chiefly herein, that they cast off his Word, *and would not hear;* Nay, cast him off; *and would none of him :* This is a fearful hardnesse, that casts off God and his Word; and sought other inventions. So that

When man casts off the Word of Christ, all blessings and joyes is shut up from the Soul of man; and when he casts off God from being his God; death & destruction must needs follow.

So to *Adam* and *Saul*; and this is complained of by the *Prophets* more than all, *Psal. 50. what hast thou to do to take my word into thy mouth; and hast cast my word behind thee?* And this was a fearful sign alwayes, of the hardnesse of the *Jews*: That they would none of Christ, nor his word, as *Joh. 10. I told you, but you believed not; nor they would not receive his Testimonie:* Nay, *Joh. 1. The word of the Father was sent a light into the world, and to his own; but they received it not.* And here *Israel* believed not his promise, that God would do thus to them; nor have God to be the ground of their rest.

1. For when man casts off his Word, and Christ; he is put to other shifts, and seeks other inventions; and walks in darknesse, and knows not whither he goes; Like an unfaithful Son, who dare not trust the truth and love of his Father that hath brought him up; but layes up a portion in secret, and gets friends abroad; and after a while, being thereby hardened casts off the Father quite.

2. For the life of the soul is hid & laid up in this Word, *Pf. 3. 5. Our life is hid with God in Christ.* For take this, & forsake life; It is the treasure of the Kingdom, all good is promised here; the Soul hath no certaintie nor foundation, but in this promise in Christ.

3. For God hath sent his Word and Christ into the World to seek out the forlorn spirit of man, that is misled by the flesh; and covered under the vail of the World; saying. Go seek and find out that desolat stranger. Thus he offers life, if it will return; But in steps the blind Reason, and Wit, and Flesh of Man, secretly whispering: Now this is a blind way: First, lay a good foundation; get the World, and something to look at, then trust; so also, be circumcised and keep the Law, and then believe: Still the Soul a little enlightened by the truth, saith: But sure this is not the way; me think, I hear, and see fair way opened, and that is, Christ is only the way of Life; no faith the flesh, Unless we be circumcised Christ cannot profit.

1. Thus

1. Thus in all unbelieving hearts, the Word of Christ is still cast off; for first, 1. It is foolishnesse to it that a man should forsake the World, live by faith, follow God with *Abraham*, he knows not whither, suffer the losse of my own Will; nay, of my Wit; nay, of my Life; and all this is a foolish way.

2. And it croseth the heart of man, (which he will needshave) for rather than he will want that, he casts off Christ himself with him in *Matth. 19. He went away sorrowful*: So that mans infidelitie is still nourished by fleshlie Reason; and fleshlie Lusts, which fight against Faith. 2. Thus the World trusts any thing, rather than God and his Word; For, 1. The World saith, Hearken unto me, and seek me, and ply it; and be diligent, and I will fill thee with fulnesse? and thou shalt not want.

2. So lust calls, Come, I will fill thee with mirth, and put away sadnesse; delight thee with pleasures; & yet the heart is sorrowful.

3. So Reason, I will lead thee the good and safe way; behold thy Righteousnesse, Wisdom, &c. What needs thou fear. These are the promises of God, and of his Word.

4. Nay, saith Christ, These will fail; *but come thou to me, and I will ease thee, and deliver thee, and redeem thee from all bondage.*

3. Nay, We, that are traders in this Word; yet how is the heart shut from the simplicitie of the Gospel; & so gets no good thereby.

For, 1. We gather conclusions from it by strength of Witt and Art; We frame it to our conceit: It begets strong opinions in us; and we frame tricks, and self-holie devices all out of it; which are but the Froth of our fleshly brains: But believing, not from a broken heart, tender & relenting. We call opinion believing, and so as among men, it is too true a complaint; That plain dealing is gone: So in Religion, plain dealing is lost. We professe the Word, and trade in it; and cast it off when we have done.

2. Or we confound Law and Gospel; because neither hath power in us; We set one in the room of the other, and make the Gospel effectual by the Law; and not the Law fulfilled by the Gospel.

3. Or we make the Word subordinate to man, and not man to it, laying a foundation in our selves of good qualities, and building the promises thereon; when it is free without condition. We judge the Word, and are masters of the Scriptures, and are not guided and governed with it.

4. Or we seek a sign or a wonder, that may confirm the Words

Word to us, that we might feel some joy and peace; that we might know some assurance: But he saith, I have given thee sure Word, to believe that; but in all, we cast away God and his Word: and hence it is, we get so little good by it.

5. But happy he, that sticks to this God and Promise; it shall not fail: speak the Word, and my servant shall be whole. What a mighty Faith, that believed that Word, and was healed?

6. But this shall be a heavy Word one day, when the Son stands condemned at the Bar; and the Father saith, Now thou seest, what is become of thy Rebellion. I was thy Father, and never wanting; or did I ever fail thee. I promised, thou shouldst not want, and gave thee my Testimonies. I sent my Son, a man like thee; he brought my Will to thee and my Promise, but thou wouldst have none of me; but thou wouldst have the Word and follow thine own Will: Thou trusted in thy own Power and Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Holiness: Now plead if thou can; therefore, not I, but that Word which thou hast cast off, shall judge thee.

Then I gave them up to hardness. When mans heart is turned from the Word of Truth, he usually hardens in some fleshly way. So that,

No greater judgement befalls man, nor surer sign of Gods destroying Wrath; than when God ceaseth to call, and worke with man; but leaves him to the lust and hardness of his own heart.

Thus to the old World, *I will no longer strive with man.* Rom. 1. *He gave them up to vile affections.* The Gentiles, he suffered them to walk in their own Ways and Counsels, Joh. 17. *I pray not for the world;* These he leaves, if man have tasted the good Word of God, &c. and fall from that Word, he is left impotent. Thus the World, when a man grows hardened, that the Father can do no good, then he casts him off.

Two things hardens above all. First, Fulness of the World. Secondly, Knowledge of the Word, without the power thereof.

1. What may we then fear, when all our former working hearts are turned into hardened knowledge and presumption. First, where is our weeping and mourning dayes? where is that melting and trembling of heart before the Word? Where are those cries and prayers after Christ and his Truth. Nay, all are turned

turned into secure talking, or dead-hearted profession; that now it is but a dead Letter. God is not with the Word, so that we may say as Deut. 5. *I have heard all your words*, But, O! that there were such a heart; we fear the plague and sword, and tremble when it approacheth; but no judgement like to this, when God leaves us to all these, and suffers man to walk in his own course to his destruction.

2. But well-worth tender hearts, whose minds are drawn from the World, and from all things of himself; what ever he feels, yea, though but death and sorrow; yet joy and peace shall come, and he will soon confound all enemies.

S E R M O N IX.

Exod. 12. 21, 22, &c. *Then Moses called all the Elders of the people of Israel; and said, Chuse you out, and take for every house a Lamb, and kill the Passeeover: And take a bunch of Hysop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basons, and strake the lintel, and the two posts of the door with the blood, &c.*

Vhen God intended to bring Israel out of Egypt, viz. Man out of the bondage of sin and Satan, and bondage of corruption; He sends Moses, Aaron, and the Prophets to guide them according to his will; according to the promise made to Abraham, and now to be accomplished by Moses. First, He sends him with a assured confidence of his assistance.

2 He hardens him against Pharaoh, and ceaseth not plague Pharaoh, till he make him yeild, though against his will; and so makes way for the deliverance of Israel; Israel, a figure of the Kingdom of Christ:

1. As they lived in Goshen, where was light and plenty; yet in bondage under Pharaoh: So we under the light of the Gospel, yet bound in infidelitie, and lust of the World.

1. Because, we stick not to the Covenant, or because the time is not yet come.

2. Though the promise was made to Abraham, and stood fast on him; yet for the present saw little hope of deliverance, so we

though the promise be revealed in Christ, yet to our unbelieving hearts, little hope of deliverance; But still in bondage under Sin and Guilt, and the World.

3. When they were past hope, after four hundred years bondage: God sent *Moses* to deliver them, by an unlikely way; even nothing but the Word of God: So, when we see least likely-hood in the flesh, God sends a mighty Word to destroy sin, and to restore us to freedom.

4. After he had laid manie judgements upon *Pharaoh*, still lesse hope for *Israel*; because he hardened and grew more raging.

So with us, after the Word hath discovered man to himself; he sees no hope, but burden, and bondage doubled.

5. Yet after they were brought out of *Egypt*; yet far from the Land of rest, because they walked not in the life of the Covenant, but after theit own lusts; So we have much to be suffered, and our Will and the World to be crucified: But when he intended to bring *Israel* indeed out of *Egypt*, then he destroyed the first-born, even the strength of *Egypt*, in whom their name and power was to be continued; and so he dealeth with us, *viz.* When he intends to deliver the captive Soul of man out of the hand of Satan, he destroyes the first-born, *viz.* Our infidelitie, and all that power and strength which Satan reared up in man, and so brings *Pharaoh* low, So that,

God never delivers his people, and brings them into rest and libertie, till he hath first made them weak; and brought down their strength, and laid them low in lamentation, and woe, *Psal.* 107. 12. *He brought down their hearts with heavinesse*; So with the *Prodigal*, and with *Paul*; He struck him blind to the earth, and took from him all his *Pharisaical* strength, as *Phil.* 3. *Yea, Davids high mountain must be taken away, that he may seek to God and be delivered.*

1. For all that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and must be destroyed; else, how can the Spirit live and be free; all that strength we have, whether of confidence, assurance, joy, &c. arising from Riches, Wisdom; Power, and other gifts and qualities of nature, are but power; whereby Satan rules in man; *Pharaoh* was Gods creature, but perverted against God, and thought

thought to keep *Israel* by strong hand ; So all the riches, wisdom, &c. are his gifts but perverted ; when we think to live and stand by them : Therefore, must down.

2. Yea, *Pharaoh*, and his hoste must be drowned in the Sea, even in that hearty, sorrow and deep humilitie, that will drown all Pride, and self-righteousnesse; or, what ever else lifts up man.

3. Thus doth God bring man to trust him, by making void all other strength to trust to.

4. For all divinity, power and strength is affirmative, or positive in Christ; only negative in us: In denying, in forsaking, in crucifying, &c. So that Christ may live positivelie in us; which cannot be, till the chief of all our strength be subdued.

1. But do we not with *Pharaoh*, still harden our hearts; and will not yeeld, though God send Famine, yet, we recover, and harden thereupon; Though Plague we escape and live; and we depend thereon; We see and taste sore plagues; but the World, or something creeps in, and shuts us up in bondage and darknesse.

Nay, though we feel smart, and want; Yet, we *Pharaoh*; Satan, Mammon lives in us; and we cleave thereto; for *Pharaohs* hardnesse is in us all in the Root.

2. Well were we, if our First-born, even all our fleshlie power and conceit thereof were slain, and that we were brought low enough in the flesh; that *Israel*; the elect soul of man, might passe on towards rest, according to the promise.

3. But the worst of all is, we feel no bondage; nay, we fear our first-born should die: The World is no burden, but a pleasure, Sin no sorrow, but delight: We like so well in *Egypt*, that we dream not off, nor despare not a departure.

4. But if God mean us good, he will kill the first-born of *Pharaoh* in us, and that by his only Word, and Messenger. *Moses*, a filly man; and yet God performed everie Word that he spake; so we fight against the power of darknesse in you; else, were it more pleasure to us to tell you of Life and Freedom; But it is not our message, We must first destroy *Pharaoh*; and then *Israel*, the poor bond Spirit of man shall flie and be saved.

5. There will come a destroying night to all men.

Then *Moses* called the Elders of *Israel*. Now before

Israel was to depart: He ordains the *Passeover*; that seeing there should be such a destruction, lest Israel should therefore doubt of the promise; he gives them a sign or token of safety, As Christ did, *when the Shepherd should be smitten, and desolation seen in the Earth, and that Christ was to leave them; then he gave them the Sacrifice of his death, to assure them, though he should die, and they suffer afterwards; yet, this should be a sign and seal of their deliverance from death and hell; Therefore, he 1. gives a command to keep the Passeover, ver. 21.*

2. He prescribes the manner, *Take the blood, &c.*

3. He adds the promise, *For when I see the Blood, I will passe-over.*

4. The stablishing of this as a perpetual ordinance to Israel.

In the first, he layes down the matter of the Sacrifice, the latter how to be celebrated: This ordinance was called the *Passe-over of the Lamb*; the other was called the feast of the *Passe-over*.

This was to be eaten in their private houses the fourteenth day of the first moneth *Nisan*; the other was to be kept seven days, and was called the feast of the *Passeover* or *unleavened bread*: So that this is properly the *Passeover*, the other the *Feast*: This is the sacrifice of their deliverance that night: the other a Feast of rejoicing for that deliverance, Wherein their was a holy convocation the first, and last day, viz. *A remembrance of the Lords mercie to them, and a teaching it to their Children.*

1. The matter of the Sacrifice was a *Lamb* of the first year, figuring Christ a *Lamb* without spot.

2. The taking of the Blood and sprinkling, it was a figure of his Death; So that all this, was but to lead Israel to Christ, and to wait on the Promise made to *Abraham*, That though they should hear a cry throughout all *Egypt* for the death that was among them; Yet, that they should stick to that Word, and behold this sign: that they should be preserved. So that,

The whole Word of God, and all the Sacrifices given to the Church, are given to lead man from all things to Christ; and the stedfast sticking to his Word and Promise, whereby they shall be preserved in all extremities, *Isa. 55.*

Behold, I have given him for a ensign, or witnesse to the people. 1. Cor. He is our wisdom, Righteousnesse, &c. Joh. 14. I am the way, the truth, and the life; My servant whom I have chosen, My beloved

loved, in him whom my Soul delighteth : All the promises in him are, Yea, and Amen, They all run upon him in Christ, through Christ, by Christ; And this was the Word of the Father, who was in the bosome of the Father; The Light and Life of men; He took flesh, and dwelt among us; and God hath laid help on one that was mighty; and as many as believe this word, shall not perish, but have life.

1. For such is the distrustful and unbelieving heart of man, that he hath given all things to draw him to believe, His Son in the flesh, and fleshlie Sacrifices and signes, that man may see the accomplishment of the Word before his face.

2. For the whole Word of God is nothing else, but a declaration of Gods purpose, touching his pleasure, towards man and that Salvation which he determined in Christ; only declared to man, that he may believe; And therefore, hath given him the Word; Christ, Sacrifices, and manie wonderful miracles and great works on Pharaoh, and all enemies, that they may wait on that Word, and stick thereto.

3. And thus Christ himself dealt with his Disciples, saying, You are all sory to hear that I must leave you, And believe not that I shall rise from the dead; your hearts will be shaken this night; but I shall die, and rise again; and that I will be present with you by the Holy Ghost, whom I will send, and abide with you; Take, and eat, this in remembrance of me, that so you may not flie to any other help nor be discouraged with any temptation in the world: For I will be with you, and not forsake you; Therefore, when ye meet together, eat this Passeover; and feast, and make merrie in me. For though I will judge the world by my word, yet I will passeover you that believe my word, and in my Name.

1. But, woe to the World, because of unbelief; God hath promised, and that Word shall be performed in Christ to all believers. This he hath Sealed by manie signs, and yet we believe any thing rather: The World promiseth, and sheweth lying signes; and we believe; Satan promiseth, and sheweth lying wonders, and we believe; But God hath given his Son, and we believe not; This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, &c.

He hath given signes, and yet we believe not, he hath

passed over others, and saved us from great dangers; and still we believe any thing before him.

2. Yea, and of all things, men are least led hither; any thing but Christ: We get knowledge by the Word, and depend thereon, and proud thereof; it lifts us up, but brings us not down to seek hither. Nay, by this word we will needs comprehend God and his Power without Christ; *when all power was given to him*: Yea, of all other, the Righteous and Religious man could not abide him, nor, walk his ways, as *Scribes and Pharisees*; So we become righteous, and will live thereby: We run into a thousand opinions, and devices, and inventions, but Christ despised of all. We provide Lambs and feed on them, but not on Christ.

And yet we see Gods way was alwayes a low way; He, a silly Lamb, and now ordinarie food of Bread and Wine; that hereby, he might reveal the great Myserie. They are poor and common, that he may crosse Mans curious devices, and that the flesh may see no beautie in them, but in him onlie.

1. There is outward Elements set before the common senses of man.

2. The Word, to inform the understanding.

3. And Christ and his Spirit to feed the heart, and spirit of man, that he may believe.

4. So that all the Word and Sacrifices are nothing without Faith, as in Heb. 4. This leads past all figures; Yea, when nothing appears but Death, this finds Life. This gives a place in the heart of man for eating of the Lamb; *Bread and wine*, a silly thing, where the heart is not led further.

It is not knowing, talking, or doing the thing, but believing that Word, and resting thereon; Now, the use and manner of the Sacrifice lets us see the life thereof, *the sprinkling of the blood*, the death of Christ; that in his death is accomplished our Redemption; *The Lamb without spot*, him, who was innocent, doing good; loving all, hurting to none, in whom dwelt all righteousness, and yet he must dye, that we may live.

In this, death is the assurance, that by suffering comes life; when this Blood is sprinkled on the heart of Man, that the eyes of man be still here, in all wants and straits; to wait

in

in Faith, here to receive life : As also, by death, and suffering, the losse of all things in patience, we are through faith made Victors over all. The sprinkling of the Blood, was a sign to *Israel* of safetie, and of their deliverance to come : So to us, This Sacrifice is given, to draw our eyes from all other things to Christ only.

S E R M O N X.

Isa. 28. 14. 15. &c. Hear the word of the Lord ye scornful men, that rule my people, which are in Jerusalem; because ye have said, we have made a Covenant with Death, &c.

IN this Chapter, is laid down the woes denounced against *Israel*, for their hardned securitie, and contempt of the Promise of God in the *Messiah*; whereunto, through fulnesse they were fallen. For fulnesse begot Pride, and that made them even drunk as with wine; and so carelesse and secure.

1. He pronounceth the woe, & then shews their present estate.

1. Under pretence of their priviledges, they were lifted up in Pride.

2. Besotted with World and sensual pleasures, as men drunk with wine, and hardned in all. Two things made them proud,

1. Their priviledges of being Gods people.

2. The fulnesse of the World, and long peace; and this defection was grown general.

1. The People, they were lifted up with a singular conceit.

2. The *Priests* and *Prophets* were grown drunk and besotted.

3. Their Princes were high minded, and scorneres : And so at last; in these Words he proceeds to judgement against *Israel*; shewing what shall befall them, and so Prophecies of the Captivity following : In which, he declares formally as in all Courts of justice, for the defence of the King his Crown and Dignitie : For therein the cryme being notorious in the Countrey, & appearing so before the inferiour Officer; they are referred to the judge, specially sent by the King; before whom they are to receive their final tryal & judgement, according to desert : Where, 1. They are called to the Bar, then the Judgement preferred, & sound witnesses produced; so judgement and execution. So doth God here, He calls

them to the Bar ; by their names, scornful men, that rule *Israel*. He prefixes the inditement against them, because they had cast off the Word of the Lord by carnal confidence and securitie ; and so were hardened against God : Which confidence appeared in three particulars, wherein they promise safety, though God had threatned the contrary. 1. From Death. 2. From guilt, and Hell. 3. From the Crosse, together with the ground thereof, vanitie and falshood.

Three Witnesses he needed not, for they out of their hardnesse confesse; He proceeds to judgement; wherein he, 1. He layes down the safe estate of *Sion*, the Church; in that he hath there laid the Foundation and Corner-stone, Jesus Christ; and the safety of all that build thereon, *He that believes, &c.*

2. And then the judgement of the enemies, as 1. That they shall have right judgement by him. 2. That he will disannul all their hopes of safetie, &c. 1. Note their present condition, and what had brought them to it, *viz.* Their fulnesse, and peace, and conceit of their priviledges above others; So, that had made them now scorers of Christ, and his Word, by the *Prophets*. So that,

Long peace, and plentie, ease and fulnesse in the World, covered with a conceit of Redemption by Christ; doth usually harden man against God, and cover man from himself, that Christ and his promise; his wayes and Religion are despised and little set by: Which, for the most part brings a heavy day in the end.

Thus the old World mocked at *Noah*, and *Psal.* the 10. *Tush, there is no knowtedge in the most high*, let him do his Word, that we may see it; Thus the *Pharisees* being full, despised the righteousness of God, and made a mock of Christ; See what end it brings, *Prov.* 1. *Because they despised my counsels, &c. Therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own wayes.* As in *Constantines* time, when the Church enjoyed rest from their enemies; and that they had peace through the Christian World: Men became vvanton in knowvledge, and fell from the truth of Christ, into foul errors, to the very denying of Christs Godhead, and the Holy Ghost. So in times of peace and fulnesse, Religion is made but a matter of discourse not of practise.

1. For two things make all things esteemed, Necessity, Delight: But when the heart is fatted up with the World, he feels no want of Christ. And for delight, he hath none; for he never felt the sweetnesse of his Love and Reconciliation.

2. For the fulnesse of the World embraced, eats out the life of Religion: As the thorny ground choked the seed, and Davids high Mountain: And Christ saith, *How hardly doth these enter into Heaven.* So that, though the World laugh and seems pleasant for the present; yet in the end, it is a miserable comforter. For, though *Israel* was now full, and despised the honny Comb of Christs death; yet afterwards, were carried captive; they were forced to sit by the waters of *Babel* weeping, and drink their own tears; as those, *Psal. 37. who had what they desired, yet were they set in slippery places; and suddenly went down to hell.*

1. This is too plain in experience; peace and plenty have been our portion many a day: We feed of the fattest, and baist our selves before the fire; we feel no smart, as do others; nor are we pinched with famine, nor hear we the fearful noise of the drum: nor are we affrighted with the terrors of an army. We dwell safe under our Vines, and are not driven from our habitation, as other our neighbours; who are glad to forsake house and harbour, lands and riches, to save their own lives. We play with our Wives and Children, and sport our selves with them for company, when others hearts are broken with cries and lamentation of Wife and Infants; and knowes not how to save them from that approaching destruction that is coming: And yet, what effect hath this wrought: even like those in *Zephaniah 1. 12.* which say; *Tush, God will neither do good nor evil; and tush, we shal feel no evil.*

2. But look for it, for where this goes before, the other will follow after. If *Sodom* mock at *Lot*, through fulnesse of bread, yet God will meet with them. And if the *Pharisees* stumble at this stone, and will not have this man to reign over them, yet the sabbling on them, shall crush them to pieces; and destroy those his enemies: But *Israel* would never believe warning, till it fell upon them.

3. To be crossed then in the World, and to suffer want reproach and persecution; is a safer way than prosperity. For, by the one, man is driven to God; for want drove the Prodigal to his Father: and hereby, the flesh is weakned and crucified, but by

by fulnesse made strong ; and no judgement nor bondage so great as this Security and Hardnesse and Slavery to our own Passions. But woe and alace to the poor World, who have not the World, and yet despise Christ most of any ; For they are left to their own dissolute Wills and Lusts, and want education in Gods Fear as much as meat : And therefore it were to be wished, that the course begun might be continued.

4. But it is a fearful thing to make a mock of Christ, and set lightly by his Word, and to be so far in love with the World, that we esteem not his Word ; it argues we find little good therein, and little comfort by the Promise : For what we find any good in, we highly esteem of, and what would pull us from our pleasant pleasures, we cannot endure : Therefore was the word of the Prophets so unwelcome to *Israel*, so to us, For first,

1. The doctrine of Faith, we count foolishness and uncertain.

2. The doctrine of the Cross, impossible.

3. The doctrine of Obedience, bondage and needlesse.

4. The doctrine of Death, most unwelcome. Yea, what account do we make of the World, what care and contending about it, and yet how lightly we passe over Christ and his Word ? But take heed, for this grows from setting light to scorning, and then to persecuting of it.

5. Pray we then with *David*, that we fall not into presumptuous sin ; For this is that Word that must save thee, and that Christ, that must redeem thee ; and that Promise that must comfort thee.

And thou little knows what thou scornest, even that, which at Death must be thy best friend ; but how can we look for him to be a friend at Death whom we have despised and scorned all our life.

Because ye have said. Here was their carnal confidence, Presumption, and Fools-Paradise ; wherein they blessed themselves under the shelter of Vanity and Falshood, they would not hear of Sin, Guilt, and Death, and the Cross ; but thought they had a device in wit and the world to put off all these. So that.

All men naturally labor, by all wit and inventions to put off the evil day far from them, and security and presumption ; to give rest to their restless hearts, rather than to feel the evil in themselves, that they may find rest through mercy in another.

So the rich fool , much goods for many dayes , so *David* blessed himself in his high mountain, and *Israel* by the Ark. Thus the *Pharisees* covered all under pretence of Holinesse , but all in vain : Nay, all cry, Peace, peace.

1. For man is lothe, to see any evil approaching to himself.

2. And mans mind must have something to bear it up , if not Christ , he runns to vain shifts.

3. Man is fallen into an evil estate of heart, which all creatures are not able to help , and he put to his shifts to keep it off as long as he can , For the fear of Hell and Death , is a little hell : These three evils pursue men , first.

1. Guilt and Fear of Hell, like a worm, gnaws daily ; and but for these, man would live merrily in the world : Thus he makes a covenant with either. by forgetting or by flattering the Law, and stablishing a Righteousnesse of his own , or presuming of mercy a far off.

2. The evil of Death presseth upon us, and threatens to make an end of all Joy, Pleasure, and Riches , and leaves no Hope to man ; thus we put off many dayes , and think we shal yet live long, when men of our age are gone and forgotten: but it hasteth upon us daily.

3. The evil of Adversity pincheth daily , now this Crosse, that Losse , this Sicknesse , that Want and Trouble ; this we hope to prevent and recover, and bow down in fear and baseness, and husband all so well hereafter, that we shal enjoy better dayes, when it is impossible to order all things according to mans mind.

So that , all these are but vain shifts and falshood : But the only way is with Christ, to take the evil day and crolle upon us.

1. For guilt to see it , and bear the indignation of the Lord, and with the Prodigal cry out dayly , *we have sinned* , &c. And wait on Him that hath overcome Hell and Darknesse , and now saith , *O Death where is thy sting ? Hell where is thy victory ?*

2. And for Death, no Covenant to be made with it ; but seeing the vanity of the World, to meet it joyfully, and say, Thou canst do me no hurt , but take the World and the Life which I esteem not, and open a door to that life which I shal enjoy.

3. And for the Crosse, no way to escape it ; But Patience and Subjection

subjection to the Fathers will, who knows, what is best to tame our proud hearts, and to crosse us in that wherein we dote. And herein appears his love, that he will suffer us to enjoy nothing that will hurt us; but even this shall turn to our good.

Thus we all strive to put evil far off, and to shuffle over the fearful dayes. We now think lightly of them, and play with waters; but when we come to grapple with death, we shal find it no play game, Look for it, for an evil day is coming; and happy he that is prepared for that day. Take heed, lest at any time our hearts be oppressed with cares of this life, or luke-warmnesse.

Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I lay in Sion. Here, He first layes the foundation of rest in the Church, that though it fare ill with his enemies; yet is his Church built upon the foundation of free mercy in Christ, and his truth revealed by him shall stand against all storms: So that,

God hath laid in his Church, and conveyed to his People a foundation of rest in Jesus Christ; which shall preserve them against all crosse of Death and Hell, and no storm shall be able to overthrow it, Psal. 125. *They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion.* Mat. 7. *They that build upon the Rock, shall abide the Tempest.*

David calls him a Rock of Stone, and Peter, the Corner-stone.

For this is prophesied of him, Isa. 9. *His Name shall be called wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, the Prince of Peace, &c, Other Foundation, can no man lay.*

1. Thence it is said, Heb. 11. *That faith is the ground of things hoped for;* because Christ, whom faith only rests on, is unchangeable to his.

2. And the promise in him, is, *Yea; and Amen:* Though in us oftentimes it is *Nay.*

3. This is that, whereby *Adam* was restored, and first laid in him; whereby *Abraham* was preserved, and *Paul* delivered in greatest extremity.

This foundation is, *Jesus Christ, the Son of God; Lord of the Covenant, the ingaved form of his Image, given of the Father for the Restauration of man; to whom he hath given all power in Heaven and in Earth: and hath hid in him the treasures of wisdom and Knowledge: and the heart of man built on this foundation by faith thereon, cannot fail.*

But

But the Church of *Rome* hath translated this foundation from Christ to the Church; from head to members; from that, Mat. 18. *Super hanc Petram*: and so they have the determination of all truth; and it to be received and believed, because of their testimony.

And so, that Christ is to be believed because of the Church; and not *& contra*. And thus they pervert one Atticle of the *Creed*, to bring all mens heads under their girdle; and that they may sit in the Consciences of men, and do what they list, without controle. They say, We are not only to believe the Church to be, but to give credit to it. To understand the difference, note *Austins* distinction of Faith; in regard of the object.

1. *Credere in aliquid*, to believe and put confidence in one.

2. *Credere alicui*, to believe, or give credit to one.

3. *Credere aliquem*, to believe that one is; or after this manner.

To believe in one, hath reference to God only; because, the object thereof must be both *verum & bonum*.

To believe or give credit to one, hath relation to his object; as to *objectum formale*, a principle for whose sake.

To believe one to be, hath relation, as *ad objectum materiale*.

The first, we agree in. And as for the second, we say, The testimony of the Church is of all humane the greatest; and can never err in the whole, nor fundamentally.

They say, *Crede Ecclesie*, as to the formal cause; for whose sake, we are to believe all Truth: and some of them, that was inserted, *tanquam meum, cum omnia alia credendi*. And so, they make it a foundation of faith; upon whose credit, they wholly depend. And this is the difference, and this we deny.

1. Because, the *Grammatical Constructions* will not bear it; *Credere*, being taken to give credit, is put with a Dative Case, and an Accusative Case; as in the *Creed*.

2. Because, there is no such certainty in their Church for man to depend on; but that which must be the foundation of Faith, must be a thing certainly known and determined what it is; not the word but the thing. For faith is not verbal but real. But according to their own assertions, the Church is a thing to them not certainly known or determined what it is.

Their Doctors divide the Church into the (Christ.
Church { Essential, The Convocation of all that believe in
Representative, The Bishops in a General Council;
Or, Council of Cardinals.
Vertual, the Pope only.

And of these we agree not, which is the Church, on which we must depend. Some will have the Essential, as *Tride. Catech.* and *Gloß.* upon *Gratians Decrees*, which are Popes own law.

2. *Cap. 24. 4. 1.* Some others, seeing this could not be, because it could not be known; conclude it to be representative, as *Bel-larmine, Herson, &c.*

3. But the *Jesuits* of late, fearing this would prejudice the Popes Supremacy too much; concludes it is the Church Vertual, the Pope only or alone.

And so while they boast of the Church; their Mother; they mean nothing else but the Pope, their Father. What foundation can there be here for man to rest on?

But we have a sure word of the Prophets, and a sure foundation, Jesus Christ; than which none other can be laid.

1. The ground then of all uncertainty in all things is, because we build without this foundation: One man layes a foundation in the World; another, in Wisdom; another in righteousness: and uncertain in all.

2. Take heed of stumbling at this stone.

1. Either at his sufferings, as *Peter*; and the Disciples, at his death.

2. Or, at his poverty and low estate, as the Worldling, *Mat-thew 19. and 21.*

3. Or at his mercy and love, as the *Pharisees* that judged him.

4. Or at his Holiness, crossing our lusts

3. See the certainty of believers. 1. They have a sure foundation, a tryed stone that abides the storm; a precious stone, full of treasure; a corner-stone, that joyns altogether in love.

He that believes, makes not haste; or shal not be confounded: For he seeks no vain shits, but sits in death and darknesse; by faith, waiting and sticking to this foundation, till the light shine out of darknesse. So that,

The only rest to man in all straits, is the sticking to Christ by faith; and waiting on the promise which shall be fulfilled in time.

Abraham waited four hundred and thirty years, Israel, seventy in Babylon, Isa. 30. Your strength is to sit still.

1. For God hath set a time appointed for every work; like a nurse which hides her self from the child; till it thinks it hath lost her, yet still hears its cryes, and comes in time.

2. God knowes it is best for a man to keep him under as yet, till his will be subdued and lust abated.

1. But the blind World will needs run before their guide, and will now have it, and so forsake God and his Promise.

2. Weaklings, who would have rest as soon as they feel any disquietness.

3. Others that will see things before they fall, and stumble for the present.

4. Wait thou weary heart, make no haste: Fly not off to any other shifts; nor fix on none other foundation. This will be able to keep thee from drowning: he that hath kept thee hitherto, is able to keep thee still; and he that cometh, will come; and will not tarry.

S E R M O N X I.

Isai. 39. 5. Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah; Hear the word of the Lord of Hosts; Behold, the dayes come: that all that is in thine house, and all that thy Fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried into Babylon, &c.

When Hezekiah had overcome the great Hoste of the King of Assyria; he fell sick, and received a message from the Lord, that he must die: Whereupon he fell into great heaviness; and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. So that,

The sentence of Death is fearful unto man, if the great and mighty hand of the love of God, do not mightily uphold him, so to Christ.

1. For this is the last enemy to be destroyed; this takes away all stays and helps in the flesh at once. We all play with it, as with a dead snake; and make a covenant therewith: but when it comes on us with open mouth, it shakes the heart of the best; if God do not mightily preserve him.

2. But

2. But if the wrath of God, the guiltinesse of our hearts, and the end of our dayes come all at once; O, whither then shall man flee? O, that man but saw and believed his own mortality! How would it pull down the pride of man, and make the World little in his eyes; and that man would but see himself on his Death-bed? How fearful is that destroying Angel, and Messenger of Death, or the Plague; when it comes to any place to them that are round about it? After this, the Lord heard his cry, and saw his tears, and gave him assurance of his life for fifteen years, with a sign of the Suns standing still for more assurance; which goodnesse of God he acknowledgeth in his Writing, from chapter 38. & 9. to the end. Wherein he shews, both the misery he was in, and Gods deliverance; as ver. 15. &c. *What shall I say, he hath spoken unto me, and himself hath done it? I shall walk humbly in sense of my own weaknesse, as knowing my life is in his hand.* Then he acknowledgeth Gods Truth and Power. O Lord, by these, viz. thy word and Power men live, and my spirit hath life in these; and that all this was of meer mercy, for in peace I had great heavinesse, but in love to my soul, thou hast delivered me from the pit, and cast all my sins behind thy back: Yet, after all these experiences and his recovery; see how he falls to the World, to be lifted up in his fleshly portion, in shewing all his store to the servants of the King of Babylon; such a vile creature is man. So that,

That after so many experiences of his love, power and wrath; yet by a little ease and peace in the flesh, shakes hands again with the World; and becomes lifted up thereby to the forgetting of his God.

So with Israel, evermore when they had ease. So with David, in the matter of Uriah.

1. For the world blinds the eyes of man, and hides the glory of the Gospel; by the glory of the world, that he is lifted up; and feels nothing of mercy and power in another.

1. We see this in experience. How soon doth man forget his misery and bitternesse of his soul, the goodnesse and power of God, the weaknesse of himself, and doth in a fools Paradise; yea, and quite runs away from that Word he once believed and found life in; and fixeth upon that store he hath gotten: when as, alace, all his store, yea, and life too was in the hand of God, even newly delivered. How soon is that faithful confidence forgotten

gotten, and those Purposes and resolutions of miserable men quite at an end. We cryed; O, that God would deliver us, and he should be our God for ever; and presently we chuse another.

2. So that, no keeping of Faith and Comfort in God; but by preserving of humility and sense of death in our selves: for as we die to the World, so we live to God; but if we live to the World, we die to God.

3. See the danger of prosperity, *viz.* of raising up of a mans heart without God, in carnal confidence; and turning the heart from God to his great gifts. This World eats the Word out of Mans heart, that now he lives, as though there were no God; and his Word a matter of no moment.

And now he comes with another message from the Lord to the King, that because he had rejoyced in his store, God would take it away, and his children also; and carry them to *Babylon* to be a prey and servants unto them.

In the Words, note two things.

1. His heavy message to *Hezekiah*.

2. *Hezekiahs* free subjection to the will of God, and justifying his Word.

First, He shewes, that all the riches and store wherein he glories, shall be taken from him; yea, and his posterity for whom he had gathered them, shold be carried Captives and nothing left, that he might return to his God: As if he should say, Thou hast shewed all thy store to the King of *Babylon*, and sent the newes of all thy wealth thither: Even all this shall be carried away to *Babylon*, and thy children also. Thus doth God, to destroy the hope of man; So that,

There is a day coming to man, that will turn all his riches and glory, and pleasures, wherein he trusteth and rejoyceth into want, sorrow and misery; and death and doom will sooner or latter, lay all in the dust.

Where is now the glory and pleasure of the Old World? or the Power of *Pharaoh*, the Wealth of *Job*, or the Pleasure of *Dives*, the riches of the rich fool, or righteousness of *Paul*? all laid in the dust. *For woe to them that now laugh, &c.*

1. For there is a way that seems good to man, but the issues thereof, are the issues of death.

2. For God will take away from man all stayes in the flesh, that he may see and know, that there is no rest but in him; for the

life of the first *Adam* must be lost, that we may live by the second.

3. Thus, God makes way for the manifestation of His mercy, and the delivering of Man out of Satans snare.

1. Woe to the deceived and bewitched heart of Man, whom Satan hath beguiled with the Lustre of the world, and drawn from his God; who blesseth himself in his present portion and pleasure, and thinks he shall see no evil, but enjoy many a merry day, but sees not the black day when all shall be taken away.

Nay, man thinks to joyn a perpetuity here, by joyning house to house, and laying a foundation in the earth; and then he saith, Is not this great *Babel* that I have built: And so shews his Wealth to the world, or at least feeds on it himself, and saith, Is not this a goodly portion, a loving wife, obedient and fine children, a good stock and portion, a certain estate, and never a failing way of increase; what hurt can come to me? Even like the thief, who blesseth himself in his stolen riches, and never thinks of his hanging-day.

But know, though we may put off the evil day a while; and first, either bury it in forgetfulness, or drink down fear like beasts, or cover it with the righteousness of the Law? Yet God will either sooner or later, strip up our hearts, and either, first,

1. By the Word, discover that misery, that all our fulness cannot remove, as before to *Hezekiah*, that with *Job*, we shall curse the day of our birth, and wish we had never been born.

2. Or if he suffer us to run out the course of our vanities with the Prodigal; yet there will come a day, that will lay all in the dust and darkness; when we shall be cast into the pit, and death comes, and will not be resisted; and then nothing but wailing and gnashing of teeth: Wailing for the Time of vanity mispent, for Guilt of heart not to be eased, for darling with the World that was so esteemed, & our friends so dear to part with: Then shall we see, that Wife and Children, Gold and Silver, that we see doted on, are but Dross: When the *Babylonians* have ransacked our treasure, as now to the *Germans*, and life taken away not to be restored.

1. Are not the fair and admired beauties now defaced with rottenness, and consumed with worms; that were as smooth, ruddy, neat, and trim, as thou art?

2. Are not the rich worldings laid low in a poor sheet ; and turned to dust ?

3. Is not the wise-man dead as the fool, and all the counsels of his heart perished ?

4. Are not drunkards and wicked destroyed ; and their name and posterity forgotten and rotten upon earth ?

2. Hence we see then, whatever man establisheth in his heart, and fixeth his mind on, but Christ, must down ; and nothing must be left : We all desire to learn something and to have something to look at ; we will trust God, but we will have something else to look at, some sign and token ; thus, man is lothe to part with all, but still he reservs some portion, some hope, some good quality, some righteousness to look at ; no, there must be nothing left, but the *Brazen Serpent* : Nothing but Christ to look at, for all else must to *Babylon*.

3. Nay, we see how he takes away all excuses, we think to establish our posterity, and gather for our children, that each may have so much, though we fear not our own portion ; but even these shall be servants, we feed them with coal stolen from the Altar ; we leave them the fruits of our covetous hearts, and so brings them into the snare for an hours pleasure, they also must into the land of darknesse : commit them to God with any portion ; for if they may enjoy any small pittance it is enough, for thou shalt not know whether they shall come to honour or low degree. Let all look for this in the day of fulnesse, look for want and miserie, for it will come ; see thy self taking leave with all thy Friends and Riches ; for *Pompey* and *Alexander* are now conquered, that conquered all the World : Yea, the best must taste of this ; for Christs last day, was his heavie day, when Wrath and Death lay upon Him. So that there is a more heavie day to be endured ; only mans rest in this day is, with *Hezekiah* ; to cleave to the Word of the Lord in subjection.

When the Prophet had delivered his message, we see how *Hezekiah* takes it:

First, He acknowledgeth the Power and Goodnesse of the Word of God.

2. He submits himself thereto, in confidence and assurance, that according to the Word, Truth and Peace should be in his dayes ; So that,

The Word of the Lord is ever good to man, & his only treasure on earth, and mans subjection thereto, his only freedom and rest, *Isa. How sweet upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings of Peace.* It is the joyful tidings of Salvation, the Word of Life, and the Message of the Kingdom; and that wherein *David* found more joy than in all riches or great spoils: The Law is spiritual and good, the Gospel is the message of Mercy and Life; *wisdom is justified of her Children*: And *Eli's* subjection to the word of *Samuel*, was his only hearts ease.

1. For though it fight against the World and Lust of mans heart, yet it is for the freeing of Man from them.

2. For this Word must stand though it fight against Man, and mans subjection must be his Rest; For the Word cannot be changed nor fail.

3. For hereby is made known the Love of the Father, which while the Child hath, he fears nothing.

4. Herein is more certainty, than if ten thousands had sworn it.

5. And our Subjection is, our present denying our selves, and partaking with Christ in his Death.

1. This carries the heart above all that he sees or feels, though he see nothing but death; as here, yet hereby he knows that he shal be relieved, as a man having committed murther, prays for pardon at the Kings hand: which being granted, how good is that word of the King to him?

2. And yet we see the carnal heart of Man sees no good in this, delights in any frivolous story more than this; believes any word rather than this, and yet what footing hath mans heart in any thing but this: By this we shal be judged, and by this we shal be freed.

3. And yet we are all found fighters against this, as in Christs time, the whole world opposed him; so when God by His Word, that the Worldings and Hypocrites shall not find rest, they rush at it, and with *Evah* think, they shal have merry dayes, when he saith, All thy high looks must down, and thy great portion must be lost: nay, saith man, But I will make them sure, and so he trusts every thought of his heart, rather than his word.

4. But know, the day will come, when this will be more worth, than all

all; and happy he that so esteems it now. And for our subjection, every man hath a will and way of his own, which he labours to uphold; and rather desires that his Word, rather than his own will might be altered: Yet, God saith, We must forsake Father and Mother, and all; But man saith no. God saith, Be content with thy portion; man covets more: So that,

None loves the Word or Gods will, but he that is prepared to bear the Crosse; that man, seeing his own guilt and weakness, may submit in humility, and look for mercy; then shall Peace be established in his heart, though war and trouble without: And truth shall preserve his soul, when all the World seems a lye to him; yea, though God seems his enemy, yet this truth becomes a friend.

S E R M O N XII.

Matth. I. I. *The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ; the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, &c.*

THis Chapter and these Words contain the beginning of the Gospel and the very sum thereof: When *Adam* had miserably fallen through rebellion, and become guilty of death; it was promised (though obscurely) that a man should rise of the seed of the Woman, whom Satan had deceived, that should overthrow his Kingdom, and deliver man out of his hands; whereby *Adam* and the faithful was upheld until *Noahs* time; then the promise was renewed: and the Rain-bow given to testifie, that still God would be good to man till *Abrahams* time. Then did God more clearly renew the same promise, *In thy seed shall all Nations of the Earth be blessed*: From that time, the Prophets prophesied most clearly of this Saviour, and with strong prayers and desires, longed after this Christ; and so, from *Abraham* till *David*, it was more manifest both in the promise to him, *Thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers, but I will set up thy seed after thee, and stablish his Kingdom; and I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.* Psal. 132. God hath made a faithful oath to *David*, *of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat.* Psal. 45. *Thy throne, O God, endureth for ever, the scepter of thy Kingdom is a scepter of righteousness.* Whereby he sheweth, that a King

shall arise out of the root of Jesse, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder. Now, here is the *Book of the Generation of this King and Christ* so long foretold off; which shewes the wonderful consent of the Scripture; So that,

The whole Word of God declares nothing else, but the fall and daily falling; death and condemnation by *Adam*, and restoring by Christ; both which, being believed; become effectual to mans good and happinesse. This *Paul* Rom. 6. Gal. 1

The first is renewed again in the Law, and shewed in all the rebellions and wanderings of men, that so man may see himself, and be ashamed; and the other a wonderful and incredible thing, that man curst and condemned, should be restored by the birth of one man. Here needs faith, as much as to believe, that the Word was made of nothing.

1. These are the two Principles of all Religion, that man see his dailie falling in *Adam*, and daily rebellion against God and his Word; daylie forsaking God, and setting up something besides Christ; which unlesse it be seen, and believed, and felt; no Saviour to man. For Christ was promised to fallen man.

2. This workes death in the heart, and in this death and dayly falling, is man directed to the *Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ*: No believing of this wonder but in death, that mans meer want and misery force him to believe this Saviour. For no reason can perswade a dead and cursed man, but the mighty word of God, which man may not argue how like or unlike it is; but that is the Truth of God for ever.

But these are two Principles that are least minded or believed. We frame a Religion of high thoughts, and make a trade of many devices; so that the simplicity of the Truth is hid by the witt and device of man. And herein, we trade for our praise and gain; But to believe the *Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ*, this too low for their deep judgements. No, they have learned this long since, they have seen their misery, but they are healed; they were wounded by the Word, but they have cured and covered it: So that now the Word cannot fasten on them. They are wise, and foreknow all things; and so able to awarde the blow. And for this book of the *Generation of Jesus Christ*, they know it, and can

can comprehend it, and dispute and prate of it; and have mangled and cut; added and diminished; but live not by it: and so full of opinion and windie conceits of all Truth, but believe it not, that this Christ is the Redemption of man only, and now joyn other books to this; We dare not rest on this without something else to under-prope. Hence came in Circumcision, Mans Righteousnesse, and Riches of the World through Reason; but to believe this Book, as to commit soul and life, and all to this promise, even when sin and death bites; is the great power of God to believe Christ to be the Saviour of the World: So that the whole Summe of Religion, is truly to know what man is, and what Christ is; truly to know sin and righteousness: the one read in the Book of our own hearts, we need go no further; the other read in the *Generation of Jesus Christ*. When man utters forth but the frothe of his own roaving mind and thoughts, the fleshly mind is tickled, but no certainty; but the book of Jesus Christ is the Word of Truth, and assurance for ever. O, that we had hearts prepared to embrace this mystery. Here is the Fountain of Life.

Here is the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ before prophesied, now accomplished. Here note the Truth and Certainty of Gods Promise; So that,

No certainty to mans heart in any thing, but in the living Word of God, and the truth of the promise believed; this abides, all things else will fail, Psal. 26. *Thy mercy reacheth to the Heavens, and thy truth into the clouds. Abraham had no hold left but this, and David no comfort in affliction but this Word that sustained him. We have a sure word of the Prophets, which, though the Fathers in reason might deny, because they saw nothing of Christs coming; yet they were to attend, till the day dawn; and then the Book of the Generation of Christ shall come, and his star shall appear in the East: So though man feel not the comfort of this Christ, yet attending in that death, on the sure Word of Prophecie; the day star shall arise in his heart. But man would feel and believe nothing, and so casts off the Word, and flies to many inventions.*

1. For all things have their turns and changes, according to their uncertain natures and disposition; and alter with fulness and emptiness, with want and riches, according to the Worlds

uncertainty, but nothing can change or disannul the promise; not the power of *Pharaoh*, nor the malice of the *Jewes*, nor the treason of *Judas*, nor length of time, or alteration of Kingdoms; but at the fulnesse of time, *Christ must be born, suffer and die*, &c. So in man?

2. This gives certainty of the Fathers Will and Love to wretched man, and he being stayed by this; endures the time of Tutors and Governours, of banishment and persecution; yea, of torment and wrath within; and tyranny of Satan: yet waits in patience the revelation of the Gospel. How powerful is the word of a King, that even by his word and wrath hath stricken a man dead.

1. How vain then is the heart of man, that seeks certainty in every thing but this? Hath not Satan promised joy and peace and loe, at death, all is gone, and man helpless? Doth not the World promise certainty in its full portion, and sure possession to thee and thine: And yet thou seest, or still fearest a decay in all: Doth not the Law promise life and peace, and yet when thou hast done thy utmost, thou art still guilty? Yea, doth not God make void the counsel of the flesh, and when man dies, all perish? and yet man will not learn nor read in this book, which is life. Now the word is certain in it self, and so to man; when the truth thereof is believed, and written in his heart deeper, than all reason, or fleshly speculations.

2. And as this book is the book of a Saviour to believers, so of death to unbelievers, that have cast off this, and followed vain inventions: For both *Moses*, in whom they trust shall judge them; and Christ, in whom they trusted not, shall condemn them; for God shall judge all by his Gospel. Then shall God say, I promised to *Adam*, *Abraham* and *David*, &c. and they found life therein: I fore-told by my Prophets; And in fulnesse of time, I sent my Son declared in the Book of this generation: But him ye believed not, counted him a deceiver. I would have performed all to the full; he saved all that came to me him by; but you were rich and wise in the World, and trusted that you were rich and devote in your conceit, and despised him: Therefore, out of your own hearts, I judge you.

Nay, without this; there is such a certainty of death and curse; that nothing in wealth or witt, no qualities or righteousness can wipe out; but it sticks fast in the bottom, till the Book of

of the Generation of Christ give certainty of Redemption by him.

Happy he who sticks to this foundation, that is neither lifted up by high wisdom, nor drawn down by base lusts; that judgeth not, but is judged by the Word of Christ. We read this story; *O, That we had hearts to read and delight in this Book or Word of Truth: we profess this Christ, and we celebrate this Feast in remembrance thereof.* But anon, every man runs to his vanity; soon weary of this, as though he either stood no need of this Book, or had it wrote in our hearts: We rejoyce and play, but it is not in this; nay, how little is this Book looked on; or minded or read in our houses, or embraced in our hearts? When that beastly drinking, liker liker Swine than Men; that unmanly custome of Cards, fitter for Childrens Bables, than to be the exercise of Wise and Reasonable men; which the good Moral Heathens could not suffer their Schollers or Children, for making them too effeminate in their minds: and yet we foolishly make them our meat and drink, and let Christ stand behind the door. Well, this Book of the Generation of Christ will stand by man to his joy, when those shall be all witnesses, of vanity and lusts of our hearts against us.

The Son of David. Now he comes to his Generation. *David* is here first mentioned before *Abraham*, because the promise was most in him; and Christ most usually promised by the Name of the seed of *David*: And so he goes on from *Abraham* to Christ. In which Genealogy note, That most of the Men and Kings that are reckoned, and of whom Christ came; were wicked men and Idolaters, as appears in the Book of the Kings; Yet Christ was born of them, and the women mentioned all wicked and sinners; save *Ruth*, who was a Gentile; and hated as a Dog of the Jewes: But *Thamar*, *Rhab* and *Bathsheba*, all Adulterers. So that,

The promise is made and so effectual, and Christ born, and sent by the Wisdom and Will of the Father, only to; and for sinful, lost, wretched and condemned men; and none else.

I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; he leaves the ninety and nine, and seeks the sheep that is lost. When *Adam* was lost, then Christ was promised. *Moses* was sent to deliver afflicted *Israel*; and *Joshua* to bring the wanderers to rest: So Christ was sent to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*. And this he

he verified in his course, *Publicans* and *Sinners* were objects of his mercie; the Poor, Weak, Halt, Lame, and Blind, he was still among; And the Rich he sent empty away, and the righteous *Pharisees* he regarded not.

1. For if Sin should hinder the coming of Christ, he had never been born; and if Sin should hinder the comfort of Christ from man, *no Flesh should be saved*.

2. Nay, *Therefore came Christ to take away sin; which by no other means could be overcome*.

3. Hereby is the love and grace of God magnified, *That he came to save Sinners; when for a righteous man, scarce any will die; yet he died for his enemies.* Object. *But all are sinners, yet he came not for all.*

Ans^r. *All are sinners, but not sensible sinners in themselves, For there is that say, They have no Sin, and justifie themselves before men, and trust in themselves to be righteous; and that need no repentance.*

These are the opinions and conceits of men, and yet no doubt, but these confesse that they were sinners formally; There are sinners in general, but covered. They are naked and bare sinners, *whose iniquity brings Death*; We confesse, we are all mortal, but we feel not the pangs of death, *So of Sin*.

For this sinfulness of man is not acknowledged of this, or that actual failing, but a feeling of the Original spring; though he be well guided, and that mercie is prepared; yet this makes him no more holie. But he feels the Fountain of Pride and Lust burning within, and so forceth to cry and pray, and look for mercy in another.

1. But all strives to appear righteous, even before God, and so makes Christ void; none would be found sinners, but if they misse it in one action, they will mend it in another, or the next; that they may be righteous.

1. The poor mindlesse honest man thinks, he hath somewhat to offer, if but his honest meaning; and harmlesse course, and diligent working; he hopes this will be one step.

2. The devote *Pharisee* thinks all his own, for his care diligence and good qualitie.

3. Nay, others think they were sinners, but now they are Righteous and Wise, and so banish Christ and cast him off; and Repentance, and Faith is stopt vwith them.

But knowv, all this is but joyning circumcision vwith Christ, for which he thinks Christ shall become more effectual as
th^e ch

though he came to seek a Righteousesse in man, and not to bring a righteousness to man; Nay, but as it was sin by accident that brought Christ into the World at first; Yea, that he was counted the Master of *Beelzebub*, and one that brought false doctrine, so it the sense of Sin still, that brings him to the heart of man.

2. Hereby is the hope of poor man preserved; that Christ came of the sinful Seed of men, and for sinful man; if he had come only of the Faithful, and would have nothing to do with sinners; then had we been lost; *But he is made a man like us*, with whom we may talk as one with another: *our Brother and friend*; Why then should the fearful conscience flie him, and make him a judge; who thinks, O! If I were a little more Holie, and lesse Sinful, I could have hope; Nay, if thou were lesse Righteous in thy conceit, and more sensibly sinful, mercy were nearer.

3. So, that it is not properly sin, that is the Rebellion of the heart against God, and in-disposition to keep his Law, that hinders Christ; not because thou art a sinner in thy own eyes, but righteous in thy own sight: These are the enemies of Christ and of his Kingdom ever. So that the Gospel of Christ never prospers, but among sinful men, you see Christ was born of them; but man grows wise, and when sin appears he fore-knows a Saviour, and so heals the wound before it be made.

Abraham begat Isaac; And so one in Christs Genealogie; where note, That as he was born of sinful men, so there was a long tract of time after the Promise, before he came; even two and fortie Generations, therein alluding to the two and fortie Stations of *Israel in the wilderness*; where they pitched their Tents, and yet removed; and all this time also the Church had great trouble; Yea, none without; *Abraham* sore tempted; *Isaac* also taken, and denyed his wife; *Jacob*, in servitude, and persecuted by *Esau*; The Judges and Kings alwayes in war: The time of the *Maccabees*, nothing but Blood-shed, and then the vision ceased; Yet even then, when the Church seemed even wasted, and almost left looking; The Scepter being departed from *Judah*; then *Shiloh* came; But here was long time, and much trouble, so with man; So that,

Man shall endure many wearie dayes, and much trouble in the flesh, before Christ be truely and indeed born in him, or he live by, and with Jesus Christ.

As

As in *Israels* stations, they set down often and might not rest there, but a new enemy assaults them: *David's* eyes failed for waiting for the promise: O! When wilt thou comfort me? why dost thou delay thy Promise? *Paul* desired to be dissolved, but he must suffer terrors without, and fightings within; and through many afflictions we enter into life: So did Christ our High-Priest, He was consecrated through sufferings: For he must suffer till his hour come, even three and thirtie wearie years; but overcame through suffering.

1. For God hath all times in his own Power and Wisdom.
2. Hereby he prepares the hearts of men to wait for grace.
3. It is worth staying, for having so sure a foundation laid; That He that cometh, will come, and will not tarrie; even a most sure Word to be attended on.

1. But we cry out with those: *Where is the Promise, of his coming?* or, with those, *Luke 12. We would know a sign of his coming:* or with the weak, *would foresee his coming with fleshly eyes*: If I knew that he would come, I could stay: vhen his Word is gone out as firm as *Mount Sion*; But by this knowing, we would have a little ease; or would know rather, than believe; nay, know that yet thou must passe many a pinch, *fight with beasts at Ephesus, suffer shipwrack, and fight with many a beastly lust*: one thief there was, that leapt ~~ty~~ and fortie degrees at one leap; but look not thou for that, but know that yet thou must be more vile: Long was the time, and great was the trouble, the Church suffered before they saw their Saviour; *So wait to the losse of all, for the vision is for an appointed time; but it shall come and not tarrie, speak and not lie.*

2. Let none then look to obtain it by a fair, easie, smooth, quiet life; by flattering the World and himself, pleasing his appetite, putting the evil day far off from him, as we all do; Nor to sleep to Heaven, when first he begins to know a little of Christ, or conform a little to his Word; no, we must passe from *Abraham* to *Isaac*; so from Faith, to suffering, from believing to the Cross; so to patience, so to experience, so to hope: But be sure we begin with *Abraham*, to live by the Promise, and hold that ever fast; and so Christ will come at last; when,

3. Thy Pride is destroyed, thy Righteousnesse pulled down, thy wisdom made foolishness, and thou in thine own eyes be made the off-scouring of men, and the out-cast of the people; when the World is become nothing, and vanisht; and thy securitie awakned

awakned : Then in the fulnesse of time, shall Christ come; in his time, not in thine, Thy time is alwayes, but his, not yet come : But he will come, and swallow up death in victory, and bind the power of darknesse and death; and subdue thine enemies under thy feet; and then shall death, the last enemy be destroyed, that God may be all in all.

4. Only in this time take heed of hardning in securitie and blind presumption.

S E R M O N XIII.

Heb. 2. 24. Forasmuch, as the Children were partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also took part with them; that he might through death destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

IN the former Chapter, he had declared the great and divine power of Christ, who was far above all Angels and Power : In this he shews, that now Christ being made the Prophet and High Priest of mans Salvation, it became him to be a man like us, both to teach and suffer for us; which he proves by divers testimonies of the Prophets, as I will declare thy name unto my Brethren, and Isa. 8. 18. Behold, I and the Children which God hath given me : So that he was made even our brother : In these verses, he concludes and explains what he hath said before, as if he should say; Forasmuch as those Children which thou hast given me, were but Flesh and Blood, and not able to free themselves; but through the same Flesh and Blood, were under the Power of the Devil, and by him kept in bondage under the fear of death; He took flesh and blood on him also, and became a weak man, that thus he might by death free his Children from that bondage : These words declare two things.

1. What man is in himself, viz. Weak under the power of the devil, and thereby kept in bondage and fear of death,

2 What Christ hath done for weak man, viz. Taken part with us, and by his death destroyed Satan, and freed us.

Forasmuch as the Children, viz. of Adam, or rather of Elect, were partakers of flesh and blood; Weaknesse, want, miserie, and death; for through the flesh we are subject to all those, so that, this is our portion, the life of Spirit is gone, and our Spirit dead for want of that life of God, so also for life and sal-

vation able to do nothing, but depend on another. So that, All men, even the Elect of God, and faithful; have nothing properly their own but flesh and blood, *viz.* Weaknesse, Want and Miserie; till they are supplied by Christ, and his fulnesse. Gen. 6. *His thoughts and imaginations are evil*, Psal. 8. *What is man? He is a thing of nought, lesse than nothing, and lighter than vanitie, lower than the Angels; and yet he found no stedfastnesse in them. Paul, though full of the gifts of God; yet the least of all Saints; in me dwells no good thing, not able to think one good thought (Do our holy high thoughted men judge so of themselves?) Egypt, but a Reed; and the strength of Pharaoh, but a broken staffe; and what is our Riches, but as grasse; our wisdom foolishnesse; our Powers not able to make white or black; our Righteousnesse as a filthy Rag; our Sacrifice, as the cutting off a Dogs neck; nay, all but grasse, and as the flower of the field.*

1. This is plain in experience; Doth not the weak heart of man flie any whither for succour, though it finds none? bowes to the World, creaves help of the arm of flesh; flie any whither for to hide himself; would do any thing for to free himself from the fear of his own heart; danted with everie noise; dead with any losse, can do no good, nor suffer any evil; and yet this silly creature sits in his own conceit as a God, a *Lucifer Queen*, that shall see no evil.

2. Whence then are all those high thoughts of judging others, and justifying our selves, seeking honour each of other, but because we see not our own weaknesse, and bondage? Nay; if our eye were returned inward, we should have no boasting; if we saw but the spring of Lust and Pride, and how unable we are to resist the least temptation; or stand in the least affliction, how good soever God be to us; yet in our selves but flesh and blood, his gifts shews his goodnesse; and they are in him, not in man; enjoyed from him, not from our own fountain.

All high thoughts then are from the devil, for all is but flesh and blood; Thy high *Turrets* and great *Babels*; and fair inheritance must come to nought, when thy Soul shall be taken, and it may be thou shalt see it.

This great portion gathered and daily increased, wherein thou boastest thy self, must all be scattered, and thou not know what shall become of it; thy deep wisdom shall fail thee; is is
but

but fleshly, not able to see into the way of life ; to prevent, or deliver thee from death ; Thy counsels must perish, thy righteousness is but a rag , shall vanish, nothing continue : Nay, what ever thou doest , thou mars it, if Christ be not there? If thou pray, or talk , all is nothing but fleshly ; only to stablish a fleshly kingdom and peace to thy self ; Nay, bring out thy best qualitie, and it is but fleshly ; such as the Heathens have as well as thou ; if Christ be not there, ' else , we needed no Christ, but our Spirits being lost , he came to breath a new life therein to by his power. Object. *But God giveth gifts to men.*

Ans. True, but if he be not with those gifts, man marrs them. Where then is the power of good motions , or, free-will? &c. To know, believe , love , repent, &c. Not in us but in Christ? And yet this makes not man secure : Doth the beggars poverty make him cease begging ; or , the lame man to lye still, and not cry for help ; Nay, the feeling of this, keeps repentance and prayer a foot in the Church , and so had we need of mercie everie day , and to pray night and day : That when this grasse withers, &c. Yet, that the Word of God may abide in our hearts for ever. Magnifie Gods mercie , that unto us so poor and weak, that can do nothing ; vouchsafes his help and grace.

3. So that all Religion is not any thing we can do to God ; we are not fitted? no, What can vve add to him , but to receive still from him ; both Faith and Righteousnesse and all ? for having none, he is made all these to us, that so vve may daily cry , *Lord increase our Faith , help our unbelief.*

4. But Religion never throve since flesh and blood , even mans fleshly vv wisdom , and conceited povver, and righteousness of man got pearckt up in Christs room , in the heart of man ; nor vvill it thrive in any till this be laid in the dust again, and that vve begin at the verie earth to abhore our selves in dust and ashes.

He took part with them. That is, vvas made man , partaker of all vvants and infirmities of man ; and yet himself conquered, being tempted ; and helps all that are tempted ; So that,

Jesus Christ that living Saviour of man is partaker and fellow-feeler of all mans vveaknesse , and infirmities that he suffers ; and lovingly helps, and frees man vvhere all help fails.

Isa. 50. 11. Isa. 63. In all their afflictions he was afflicted; and the Angel of his presence comforted them. Heb. we have an high Priest subject to like Infirmities, that he might be able to comfort us, he took upon him our sins, and bare our infirmities; and he was counted the great sinner of the world.

Like a loving Elder Brother, who seeing his younger brother overladen, takes the burden; sees him beaten; weeps; sees him want, gives him half. For though he was the Word of God, and was God; yet he took the form of a Servant, and became flesh, and dwelt among us; that we might see him a man in the flesh like us; and suffering more than we all, and yet overcame: Thus, he was given as a witnesse to the People, and the first-begotten among many Brethren.

1. What then are all those high Contemplations that soar above, and seek Christ in Heaven; and make him a high speculative Angel, and rack their thoughts, and beat their brains in comprehending? When, alace! He is with us, like us, suffering, watching, praying; poor, judged and reproached; and dying as we are. He cares not for those high religious ones, but pure and contrite ones: With these he hath fellowship, and they with him.

2. What hearting is this to patience; that he as a husband, is ever with us in well and woe? Thou thinks thy case singular: thou art poor, he poorer; thou wants the Fathers Love, so did he; thou art afflicted, so was he; thou art sick, he swate drops of water and blood for the sick: Nay, in all he was with thee. But we have little fellowship with him: we sport our selves, and are full; strong and wise, and so strangers to him: We are righteous without him, so that he hath nothing to do, but with poor beggers.

3. And where Christ partakes with us, there he makes us also to partake with others; to mourn with them that mourn, bear their Infirmities, and covers sin, helps the needy, relieves the oppressed, &c.

All high flying Religion then, is not of Christ, but of the Devil; for Christ therefore brings down all high thoughts, for they are against Christ. Then Christ hath little working among us, when every one is for himself; when we judge and condemn instead of pardoning; spread others infirmities, instead of covering them: laugh at others fall, and not mourn for them; robb

and

and not relieve the poor ; nay, with the unthankful servant, take him by the throat.

4. Believers have a friend at back, He gives a mouth and wisdom ; the world may fail and friends, and wit too short , and riches perish, and the life gone; yet he fails not as to the Martyrs , who had him in all troubles a Protector and Captain, and in His power overcame all.

That He might through Death. Here is the second thing that Christ hath done for us, viz. *Destroyed the power of Satan*, and delivered man; and the way whereby, *through Death*. So that,

Christ Jesus , the Son of the Virgin and Savior of the World, hath vanquisht ; and doth daily overcome the Power and Tyranny of Satan, which he hath, and exerciseth over the Church and Souls of the Faithful ; and by His Death, hath freed and delivered ; and daily doth deliver man from that bondage.

So it was promised , when Man had fallen from God to Satan, and was now become a Scholler in his school , viz. by subtilty of Wit , and strength of Lust to fight against God, and stablish his owu peace in the Flesh : God promised to raise up one of the *seed of the woman* to crush this power, by disannulling that Peace, and bringing man to suffer the Death and Losse of all things , i John 3. *Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil* , viz. To turn that peace into War , to pull down his high Mountains, to set mans crooked way straight , to bring man to Repentance , and so to bring him into His Kingdom ; *He came to bind the red Dragon , that made all drunk ;* and to this end, was the Gospel sent by Paul to the Gentiles, *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darknes to light, and from the power of Satan to God.*

This was figured in the fall of *Jericho* , the City of Gods enemies and Idolaters ; the walls were high, the inhabitants strong; *Israel* few and weak, the means weaker, *Blowing with rams horns*: Yet by the spirit of believing *Joshua*, they fell. So also man is weak, the walls of Lust and the World are strong and mightie and wille ; but by the foolish way of Preaching , and shout of the Gospel, the Towers fall; and Mountains fall at His presence, and Christ enters. Also figured in the Victorie of *David* over *Goliath* ; he weak , means weaker : but exposing himself to death, and casting his life into the hands of God , by Faith in the God of *Israel* , he overcame , and took the bondage and shame

shame from *Israel* : And figured also in the Victorie of *Hezekiah* over *Senacharib*, that great beast ; he cried and wept, and spread the letter and prayed : and *Senacharib* fell into his hands without lifting up a dart ; even one hundred fourtie and five thousand in one night. So when Christ prayed in the garden in His agonie, and embraced Death in subjection to the Fathers will ; He overcame hell and death. So still it is, when man is wearie of that bondage, feels no power, spreads his heart before the Lord, even readie to meet death ; then is he freed by a great deliverance.

1. For though Christ by His power, might have delivered man, and not died ; yet this was not profitable for man, both that the power of God might appear, and that He might be a faithful and fit High Priest to sustain man in the power of Death.

But this was an unlikely thing to reason, That a man by dying should overcome, He rather seemed to be vanquished ; yea so He did : But therein He tript the devil. For while Satan laid on stripes, He gave his cheeks to the nippers, and let Satan strike his full, and shoot his last dart, whereby he had thought to have driven Christ from the father, or to have sought help of the world ; but He continued still patient, and at last rose and triumphed over hell and death. Nay *Balaam* could not prevail against *Israel* by all his curses, they still being stayed on God ; but by his wicked counsel perswading to draw them to sin, he wrought their death : As by his wilie drawing men to live by the world without God, that way he prevails much ; now Christ delivers by His death.

1. Having paid the debt, and answers the law ; and became a curse for us. Who hath any thing to lay to our charge ?

2. In sustaining man by His grace, and upholding him in death ; for if we die with Him, we shall live with Him ; and if we suffer with Him, we shall be glorified with Him.

But we seek deliverance another way, and think to escape death.

1. One by his gaining the world, not losing it ; by saving his life, not by giving it up ; to that end is wise, diligent, careful to put the evil away.

2. Another by the first Covenant, and stablishing a righteousness of his own ; but that hath nothing but death in it.

3. All

3. All hiding and covering, and increasng what they have; and tinkling their old rotten hearts, not by forsaking all and Repentance.

2. But we see the way of Life and Freedom, is, by death.

1 By believing the great power of Christ, whereby he overcame death.

2. By patient submitting to the will of God, no way to overcome but by suffering.

3. So that all this strong hearted Religion, and high flown thoughts, bear out all danger through hardened presumption and a stiff conceited Righteousnesse, or high and loftie knowledge; like those, *Isaiah 28.* that put the evil day far off, and hide themselves under vanitie and falshood, is not the way of Christ; no, His way is a low and dying way, They reproached Him, and He bare it; they banisht Him, and He had not whereon to lay His head, and He cared not: They apprehended Him, and He lift not up a sword against them; they accused Him falsly, and He said nothing; they crucified Him, and He prayed for them; and when they laid Him in the grave, in darknesse, and that the power of Satan could do no more, He rose and revived, and shut the mouth of hell, death, and the grave, that they should never hurt any of His: But by death he overcame death, and brought Life and Immortalitie to light by the Gospel.

4. And this shews the miserable captivitie of Sin, and vilenesse thereof, that nothing can loose but Death; as the Wife or Brother that hath committed such an offence, that nothing but the death of the Husband or Brother can save her life; how may this break the heart with sorrow; we pity Christ, that so innocent a man should suffer death so unworthily; but see Christs answer to the women that wept for His death, *weep not for me, but weep for your selves*: He needs not thy pity, but weep for the death and desolation that thou and thy children must suffer.

Him that had the power of Death. For this was left to Satan; he had power to tempt man in the heel, and losse of all things, even of life; and was the executioner according to the sentence of the judge, but not beyond his commission; So that,

Satan hath a large power and dominion over man to tempt and vex man with all calamities and losse of the dearest object, yet cannot make void the Redemption of man to his destruction.

Thus with *Job* in all things, but his life; and yet by Faith and Patience he got the Victorie; when once he laid his hand on his mouth, and repented in dust and ashes. Thus he reigned in malice against the Martyrs, even unto death; but their Kingdom and Peace he could not take away from them: Thus against Christ. And he is called the *old Serpent*, and *Satanas*, the accuser of the brethren. Thus, Satan brings Death in all things, where the heart is not freed by Christ.

All unbelievers are taken captive to do his will, as;

1. To the worldly heart, he offers the Kingdom of the world; and life by them; but death lurks under.

2. To the lusting heart, by satisfying that; but shame and guilt follows.

3. The hypocrite, by high thoughts and self-righteousnesse, poysoning his Religion with a false opinion, like an angel of light; that he may cast off Christ: Others he follows with troubles, to drive them to seek help in his Kingdom. Nay, when he offers life and ease in any thing, he thereby intends death, and brings it in the end; and when he threatens death, it is to seek life in him: So no way to overcome, but by taking away that life of his by death, and to overcome this death by suffering, and by the life of Faith through Patience.

2. The greatest snare of the devil is, in all thriving wayes; for he is farenly covered with pretence of good, peace, and fulnesse, &c. But beware, for death is in the pott; if he cannot draw Christ to doubt and deny God, then he grants as much as Christ saith, *True thou art the Son of God*, and he will keep thee still, thou art now on the Temple, the highth of Holinesse; cast thy self down on this, if that prevaile not: Then he comes with all the world in his hand, confessing still all that Christ urged: No I see thou wilt not tempt God, therefore use thou the means to live and bow thy heart to the world, that thou mayest live well, and do good: So trying alwayes to worke death to the mind of Christ; and when this would not prevail, then he sets all the world in malice against him.

3. No way then, but living by the Word and nothing else.

he can deal with everie thing but Gods Word, and unlesse he can steal this out of the heart; he can thrust nought else in. This keeps out all things else but Christ, but if we begin to hearken a commune with flesh and blood, and believe his promises, he will promise life in all things, when death is sure to be in the end: *which for fear of Death, were all their life-time through sin and guilt; So that,*

The fear of death and destruction is the fruit of Sin and Guilt, which keeps all the hearts of the sons of men in bondage, until they be freed and delivered by Christ.

When the Law came to *Paul*, death came: Death went over all, *because all had sinned*: And how do these in the *Revelation*, cry for mountains to cover them; these in *Isaiah* 28. were glad to make a covenant with death; and *Adam* made aprons of fig-leaves to cover his shame: Nay, this is that which all labour to prevent and flee, as hell.

1. For man is guiltie before God, though by fore-knowing of a remedie, he thinks to cover it; and as oft as this guilt is naked and bare, fear possesseth the soul.

2. For death leaves no Hope, dasheth all at once; so that if the worldling could escape this, he were a jollie man.

1 Thus we see, what an uncertain case man is in, that fears death everie hour; especiallie, if man were made sensible of his condition: but this Satan hath covered for a while, and saith, Thou shalt not die. And so we sit quiet and fear no evil, but how fearful is the plague or sword where it lights!

2. Nay, but what a tossing of heart there is in a dying man, betwixt fear and hope, which is worse than his pains; now he hopes, then the disease pincheth him; and he fears again, then hath rest and hopes again: But note, That this remains all our life long, even still in the heart of man: O! that it were in us all, it would waken security, and set the heart a seeking and praying; but we live, as though no danger were towards us; but the time will come, when we shall call for the mountains to cover us, and not find ease

S E R M O N X I V.

Luke 22. 31, 32. *And the Lord said to Simon ; Simon , Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat ; but I have prayed that thy faith fail not, when thou art converted, &c.*

When Christ had now finished his course , and was now readie to suffer that fearful and bitter hour , He foretells the disciples what to look for, and will befall them; *viz.* He will strike the Shepherd, and what then will become of the Sheep : they had lived with Him in peace , or at least such a trouble as was easie to bear ; but now must all be shaken, and so fore-warns them of the Crosse that they must suffer ; he fore-warns them of the Crosse and miseries to come , and that by the Instrument of Satan , amplified by a Metaphor , He assures him of help , and that by faith he shall be preserved , and that he hearten his brethren.

After *Peter's* brag , and *Christs* answer , First, He shews how Satan as an enemy stands waiting and seeking to overthrow Christ and His Kingdom , by which he might shake the faith of all His followers ; for if he had overthrown Him , then Faith and all had been dashed ; So that ,

Satans main drift to worke mans eternal destruction , is to overthrow Christ and His Kingdom, and to drive man from Christ , and to seek help elsewhere.

Thus with *Job* , thus with *Annani as* , and thus with Christ in His temptations ; still granting what Christ alleadged , and still labouring again to trap him in that : for still he traps man in that wherein he stands ; as the vvorl ding, he fills them with fear, and pleaseth his lust , and the vveak to vvorke it out ; and he laid load upon *Paul* , fightings without , and terrors within : And thus he layes reproaches upon the Truth , and blazeth the failings of the Faithful , to slander the Truth ; for he is the accuser of the Brethren.

1. And herein stands the salvation of man , that he can deal with any thing but Christ ; the wisest or holiest he can catch, and keep him in his snare, and fill them with fear or hope, that he sifts them and keeps them in his bag.

2. For

7. For he hath power over man to tempt man in the flesh and to sift man, and leave him nothing but brane: For when he hath ground man to powder, he sets his servant, the flesh, to sift him; and he reasons and looks from what he feels; and sees no help left, but all is gone; but Christ through patience overcoming him: Thus he Winnowed the Martyrs, and left nothing in the flesh to uphold them; and thus he workes their good against his will to purge man of the flesh, and to drive him to Christ.

3. The whole truth is revealed by Fire: First, Thus he drives all another way, and he cares not what way he goes, so he looks not this way.

1. The Worlding he keeps in fear of want, or failing, or decrease, or uncertainty; and so keeps him close, like *Israel* in *Egypt*.

2. Others that look after Christ, yet keeps the World alive in the heart through Lust, and that all is theirs, they having right, must provide for honest things as that all is theirs, &c. and so he makes Fig-leave-coverings, but the heart Rotten.

3. Others he lifts up above the simplicitie of Christ and their own minds, by great and high speculations, to falsifie the Truth by false Doctrine; and all this to hide Repentance from mans heart, that so the Kingdom of Christ may not come.

4. Others, by joyning somet hing, as Circumcision with Christ; and the Gospel is perfected by the Law, and not the Law fulfilled by the Gospel.

5. Others he pursues with calamitie and miserie; as inward Lust and Rebellion; frowardnesse of their own will and indisposition to any good, that so man might get ease thereby.

6. Others by losses, crosses, wants and troubles that he may distrust God, and cleave to the arm of flesh; and so consent to *Rabbekeys* Letter, saying, Thou trustest and believest in Christ, he will deceive thee; thou art forlorn and forsaken, it were best to look after other helps a little, and then trust God; so that, whither he offer Life, or threaten Death, he intends Death, and forsaken of Christ; for *Paul* he knows, and Christ he knows.

2. He never prevails so much as in a thriving way, whereby

whereby the heart becomes lifted up, he never overcomes so much by misery, let him fain as much as he will; all this is but to weaken the flesh, and to bring down high Mountains; and bring Job to lay his hand on his mouth, and repent in dust and ashes; So that, nothing preserves man, but a simple repenting heart.

Sensible of weaknesse in the midst of greatest gifts.

1. The simplicitie of the Gospel written in mans heart.

2. Simple believing and patience to suffer, and overcome; so with Christ, *He was the wisdom of the Father; he patiently bare the wrath of the Father for man.*

To winnow you like wheat, This was a coming, when the Shepherd was smitten, all friends forsook him; the Earth shook, Darknesse was over all; Peter accused, the rest fled: Christ crucified like unto a murtherer: laid in the grave; all gone, so that nothing was left; but the wisdom that Christ had given them, and Faith in that Promise to believe, that he would come again: So that Ranson saw little to trust to, So that,

There will come a winnowing day upon all Flesh, good and bad, to destroy; and take from men all confidence in the Flesh, in which the Faithful shall be preserved only by Faith, and Repentance and Patience.

The Lord will in righteous judgement winnow the wicked, and Satan that falsifier? Where is Pharaohs Power, and Pompeiy, and Dives, and Wealth of the Worldlings; and righteousness of Paul? Is it not all found too light? God hath had his Fan in his hand, and no unrighteousnesse shall stand before him; For they are like those chaffe before the wind; Woe to them that laugh, for their covenant of Death shall be disannulled or broken.

1. For God maks way hereby for his mercie, and purifieth faith, and driveth man to himself, though grievous, yet wholesome

2. All joy and life of Adam must be taken away, and nothing doth that, but Christ.

3. Then though Satan now insult and triumph like a King, yet he must be cast into the bottomlesse Pit, and all that obey him.

4. There is away that seems good, but it must be tryed, and poves death; as that of Peter to Christ, *save thy self*; but this is not good.

1. Know then, that this day will come. We laugh and
Feast

Feast and Drink, as though it would last alwayes; but know as to a Schollar or idle Servant; that when he hath sported all these dayes, there will come a black-Munday and hard Work.

So that, though we sport our selves in quiet, cover our own guilt, delude sorrow, and drive it from our hearts, put off the evil day, play the Wanton with our knowledge, and Feast a while with Christs dainties; as he dealt with the Disciples, who brought them on by immediate power and love; but in the end, he must be taken away: So know, that these will fail; and nothing left, but naked Christ, a poor despised man: Let the Worlding know, that there wil come a scattering night; where thou and thy guilty portion must part, and horror possesse thy mind; which all thy Wealth will not quiet; Yea, thy Father and Mother, Childe, &c. will be found too light in that day; Yea, thy joy, in thy Works and Knowledge. Then will he say, Bring out thy Righteousnesse, and all thy qualities of holinesse, thy joy and comfort; thy Manna laid up; nothing then will serve, but praying to escape that hour, and yet shall not; but believing that his grace is sufficient.

But we drink down sorrow like beasts, or we hide as under the World, or vve make an agreement, and put it off; We call for Mountains and high devotions to cover us, but all this vvould not free *Job*, nor preserve *Jeremiab*, but down they must.

So the time vvill come, that God vvill either by his Word and affliction try us, as by fire; *and then shall we curse the day of our Birth*; or else try us at Judgement, and say, What have I done unto thee? Wherein have I failed thee? what hast thou wanted? I warned thee of this night, and told thee of this time, but thou would not believe, *thy Blood be upon thine own head.*

But I have prayed for thee. How shall man do in this day of Wrath? yet here is a friend at back, Christ praying, *as to the men in the Ship*, and he gone into a mountain to pray. So here he knew the sorrows of his people, as a *Man of sorrows*, and so prayed for them; So that, here we see the brotherly care of Christ; So that,

That in great Dangers and Weaknesse of man, Christ doth and is readiest to help.

What care had he of his *Disciples*. and how earnestly prayed he for them, *Isa. 63. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, he leaves*
the

the ninetie and nine in the wilderness, and seeks the lost sheep. Heb. 6. we have a faithful High Priest touched with our Infirmities. Like a loving brother, if his brother be overlaid, he pitieth his weaknesse and helps him; if he be beat, he stands by and cryes; if he want, he gives him half: Or as the husband helps his Wife, runs and rides to do her good. For though he was the word of the Father, yet he became a High Priest and fellow-feeler of our infirmities; he was given as a Testimony and witnesse to the People, and the first begotten of many.

1. What then are those high mystical Speculations and Conprehensions of Christ, making him so high; like speculative Angels? This is but an airy Christ, but our Christ is low and among us, suffering, watching and praying with us and for us. He comes not for these high thoughts, but for pure and contrite spirits.

2. What a hearting is this in trouble to endure, when Christ, like a husband is present in well and in woe? We think our case miserable; we bear the burden of sin: lo, he was forsaken and sick; he swate water and blood, he bears our weaknesse; but who feel it? he pities our tears, but who sheds them? he hears our cryes, but who makes them?

So that all high thoughted Religion is not of Christ, but of the Devil. He came to bring down high mountains and Imaginations: We see then, that praying believers have a Friend at back; praying, when we are suffering. Friends may fail, and Riches may vanish, and life taken away; but he endures yesterday to day, and the same for ever. If then, we are weak and miserable, Christ is never wanting.

That thy Faith fail not. And then let him do his worst, while thou sticks to me, and goes with me through death and hell; So that,

The only way of safety in all straits; is a praying and believing heart; and while these continue; nothing can prevail, Psalm 107. *They cried in their distresse, and he heard them; we are kept by the power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* 1 Peter 6. 8. *Whom stedfast, resist in the Faith.* Psalm 9. *They that know thy Name, trust in thee.*

1. For them, their cause is wholly committed to God, and to his Mercy.

2. These

2. These are the weapons that overcomes by suffering.

3. These overcome the World, and crucifie the flesh, which only worke our bayne.

1. But our mouths are stopped, and hearts straitned. We live by conceits only; we are full and pray not: Want makes man pray; and weaknesse, him believe: And so Satan never overcomes; none but wise and strong men, these Christ rejects.

2. But the time may come, when we shall cry, and not be heard; whatever stops straitens and hinders prayer, is a snare: But O, Praying dayes are gone! But, Lord, increase Faith in all our hearts.

When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren. This is the monition that Christ left, and thou must go through much fear and have experience of sorrows; yet faith shall overcome, though Infidelity seem to overcome: yet shall faith discover it, and then by renewing Repentance, Faith shall restore thee: So that note;

That the faith and comfort of a man being over-clouded, and covered; is renewed by daily Repentance, as in *David* and *Peter*, and the Incestuous man.

1. For as Christs Kingdom comes only to repenting hearts at the first; and as Sin in the World by accident, brought Christ into the World; So sense of sin in mans heart brings Christ thither.

2. Here is way made in mans heart for mercy and joy in Christ, and the heatt driven to seek him in earnest.

3. Though man build hay and stuble on this foundation, yet God will destroy them by Fire and the Crosse, and bring back *Israel* with joy that went out weeping.

1. But herein it is, that our Faith is turned to a dead and fleshly security, because repenting dayes are gone; we did repent, and felt the bitternesse of sin, but it is all removed, and joy and freedom is come, and thou become secure: so that thus turns the eye from our selves, and Christ too; and so repentance is hid from our hearts. Is sin lesse odious to God than before, or doth he more tollerate it in thee than others? Art thou not more guilty, having felt his love, to turn from him; Is not thy Pride, and Self-Will and Love thy

thy security, and high thoughts as odious to him ; and as great rebellion in thee , as was the wanton sins in the days of thy Ignorance. Hast not thou as much need of his grace , and power to preserve thee , as ever thou had to receive them? Shall we sin, because we are not under the Law , but under grace : Nay, as hard shall thou be sifted ; but I will bring thee back by deep Repentance, and thy Faith shall revive, though for the present it fail.

2. So that Faith is not preserved, but by deep and daily humilitie and repentance ; As Saint *Paul*, though he was partaker of great gifts, and more experience of Gods love and power, than thousands, yet hereby was it preserved: He stil rejoyced in infirmities, *when he was weak, then he was strong* ; Great Knowledge , devote Holinesse , and high Thoughts, chooke Faith ; only humilitie preserveth it. The one lives by opinion, as light as wind ; but the other by Faith and mercie, he feels nothing but weakness and guilt.

3. Well-worth weak and repenting hearts , that weep with *Peter*, We deny him often, but repent seldom : What ever knowledge , or other thing they have , yet if this be kept lively, Faith shall not fail ; though it be seemingly lost , and he turned his back, and he sees no way to peace: Yet wait a while, and light will spring out of darknesse , and well-worth Crosse that preserves Repentance in man , when he sees his own beastly guilt ; how he hath forsaken God, and run from him ; and sees how all fails ; then he returns : So it is hard to preserve Faith lively in prosperitie. It is a great point of simplicitie to enjoy all gifts , and yet look at none ; We see then, whereby man is preserved in all straits , *viz.* a praying and believing heart ; all else vanish.

4. But praying dayes are gone. We have wept , but now rejoyce ; We were weak , but now strong in our selves.

Strengthen thy Brethren ; Pitie not me, nor weep for me ; but weep for thy self ; and pitie thy Brethren ; So that.

As the life of Faith is in Christ only, see the practice of Faith is in love to the Brethren, *David*, *Plal. 16. My goodness is nothing unto thee , but to the Saints that are in the Earth.* Thus all rules of practice after Faith , that are stablished by *Paul*, are such like as help the weak, admonish the un-ruly , &c. and Christ left this his last Law, *Love one another* , and Faith works by love ; This was Christs practice all his dayes in doing good, and this is a free disposition of a Redeemed Spirit ; the flesh seeks its own, but love doth not.

I. Thus

1. Thus is the Fathers Love spread abroad, and the Truth of the Gospel; and the Church increased, and herein is the Communion of Saints.

1. But we all walk in the thearick knowledge of Faith and Christ, and nourish our thoughts therein; but we forefake the practice of Faith: for self-Love, and Pride hath drowned all hearty Religion. Do we help the poor, and relieve them? nay, we spoil them; do we bear with the Weak? nay, we judge them? do we cover the sins of others? nay, we spread them; Do we love our Enemies? nay, We hate them.

2. I wish we had lesse Knowledge, so we had more Faith and Love. Is it not a shame to see how Drunkards are linkt together, and every Sect as one man; and yet, we that professe to believe in Christ, lead everie man to his own gain: So we thrive, we care not who losse; who grieves and bears the burden of others.

I will go with thee, though all forsake thee. Pride of heart, and over-weaning conceit of our own power, because of some singular gift above others is the readie way to fall before all; so its in the *Jews, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Lucifer*; So that,

There is a presumptuous and proud carlesse confidence from the arm of flesh: which goes under the name of Faith, and lifts man up in securitie a while; but will fail in the end. Thus *David*, Psal. 30. And his numbering the people.

S E R M O N X V.

Dan. 3. 16. 19. *Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the King, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*

IN the former Chapter, *Daniel* had interpreted the Kings Dream, concerning the Image of Gold, Silver, Brasse, Iron, and Clay; and the destruction of several Monarchies, by the Stone hewed out of the Mountain without hands; that is to say, The power of Christ, whose Kingdom should

should overcome all the rest, and be everlasting, never to be destroyed; by which the King was convinced to acknowledge the great Power and Wisdom of the God of *Daniel*; and fell into admiration, but understood not the Myserie of Christ therein, nor the downfal of his Kingdom, and therefore presently returns to his old Idolatrie; So that,

The Word of God from God, and the great work of his power, doth for the present put man to silence, and convinceth him; yet, where the heart remains hardened, and that the myserie of Christ is hid from man, he soon returns to his old vanitie and Idolatrie of his own heart.

Thus they are often convinced by the great Works of God, Psal. 16. *Yet forgot how they were brought out of Egypt, and walked not in the Covenant, but returned to their Lusts*; And the Pharisees in Christs time often put to silence, but soon grew wise again to maintain there own Kingdom.

Yea, how manie of his followers, who saw his great Workes, and confessed never man spake like him, or did the like; spake with such power and assurance, and yet forsooke him; see the stony ground, and those of *Judea*.

1. For ease and peace, and prosperitie being offered, and a man lothe to live without them, *they choak the word*.

2. The Knowledge of the Gospel without the power of Christ and his death, hardens above all; none such enemies to the simplicitie thereof.

3. For if the Truth and Power of God be revealed, yet if God keep not the Promise of Repentance by the Crosse, and so bring man under the power of that Word, he soon starts up and becomes Wise, and Righteous in himself; not in Christ in the flesh, not in Faith.

4. Though for the present it dash man, and convince him that he confesseth and sweareth that it is the truth; yet when it both crosseth his present ease and libertie, and brings no life but death for the present; he grows wearie, unlesse the great power and love of God pursue his Soul by his Word and Crosse. Hence comes so much back-sliding in the church, that men admire the great Power of God, yet not living in Repentance under the Crosse. Every thing starts up, and so, they turn to the old way, or a
new

new device of their own; but do not believe the down-fall of their Kingdom for the present. For most men, when they have talked and shewed abroad their Wisdom, Righteousnesse, and increased their Glorie; they are the old men again: The World is welcome, and sweet, Sin as light, themselves at ease and secure, as they had never known such a thing.

1. And yet they know their ease and securitie ariseth not out of simple confidence of Faith, but hardnesse of heart; and clothed under a vail of Religion.

2 So it is a fearful thing to grow hardened after truth revealed; that man joyn hands with the World; and that sin become lesse sinful in conceit. This is a meer securitie and not Faith; for if a man flie off, and that the Word cease to judge man, arraigned at Gods judgement seat: For Christ hath two judgements in mans heart, *viz.* Judgement and Mercie; so it is said, *Man must give an account of what he hath done, Yea, of every idle word;* which is true in mans heart: for they are judged, and man tormented, untill he apply to mercie. For if he be not before one of these two, he is secure; nay, this we see too common in all men.

1. For though they must be brought at one time or other, to be judged in themselves, and confesse that it is the way of Faith; Repentance and Love is the way of Life; yet how soon become hardened, and cast it off. it gets
a life else-where; that they cannot d plea-
sure, and life is in Christ, but in another World, a-
nother in his pleasure, another: in his g., and righte-
ousnesse; and none abides: but with this *Nebuchadnezzar* falls off.
But know, that this Word shall judge thee one day.

2. Hence we see, what a Fountain of Lust and Rebellion is in all men, believers and others; how often hath God expounded our Dreams, restored our freedom, given Life in Death? and how soon are we returned either to the Worlds shifts in straits, or forget the Lord, that brought us out of *Egypt*; and feed ourselves with pleasure?

Nebuchadnezzar made an Image of Gold, fifty cubits high: He had forgotten the God of *Daniel* soon, and now makes an Idol, for his own glorie; and preservation, even thus doth all; So that,

When

When mans heart turns away from God and Christ, that he is not known, believed and loved; every man set up the idol of his own Imagination in his heart; and forsakes the God of Heaven: that is to say, a God, a Christ; and a Righteousnesse, and Wisdom in Imagination.

Thus every Nation had their Gods, all reasons are a God framed or comprehended in the witt of man: Therefore, God gave this great Law, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.*

1. Thus Satan is called the God of this World, who sets up his Law in mans heart. For there is in every man the sins of all men in the root, so that as the Heathen, that know not God indeed; yet had many Imaginary Gods: So all men that know not God, or forsake Christ, make many Christs; though not all of one fashion, yet such as mans Imagination leads him to.

2. For mans heart must have something to uphold it, either real, or conceited; therefore, in want of the God of life, he must have some God; and something to trust to; or sometimes for which he must trust God the better: in all which, though it be nothing but the Idol of his Imagination, yet Christ must bear the Name.

He confesseth the *God of Daniel*, but hath an other Idol whom he worships. For doubt not, but all the Heathen had a general confused conceit of God; unto whom they then framed God a kind of conceit. For reason could tell them, that : give them; neither could *Nebuchad-*

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when I
but had
Some acknow
whom they live, but something else : So that,

Thus the World and the Church is full of Idolatrie, every man setting up the Idol of his own heart.

One sets up a Golden Image, as the King did here, and makes the World his great God. This he serves and trusts and worships; yea, in all his laws and threats, he fears the loss of his labour: For if this God smile, he laughs; if he frown, he grieves; if he threaten, he fears; if he promise, he believes; and this is the greatest God, most worshipped in the World. The rich adores it, the poor prays unto it, all bow unto it; But the great Idol in the Church, is mans knowledge and righteousness. This is that

the false Apostles set up. This he decketh with Devotion, Zeal and Charitie, but yet not much of that; he worships God before this Idol; he acknowledgeth Christ, yet with circumcision joyned; this we make only God, we bow down as unto it: Nay, the Idols of mans imaginations are endlesse. For the greatest contemplators, saith *Luther*, Are the greatest Idolaters, for they make an Idol of their own imaginations, or their speculations; Christ and *Paul* was none of these, they lay in misery, they believed God, they practised love, and went about doing good.

1. For by how much any goes about to comprehend Christ and his Word, not believing in him, from a broken and repenting heart, but from strength of imagination he is the great Idolater; but know these are cursed and the makers of them, they have mouths, but speak not; eyes, but see not the way of life: noses, but savour not the things of God; feet, but walk not in the wayes and love of Christ; and they shall not all help in time of need. Thy Knowledge shall vanish, thy Righteousnesse be judged faultie, thy gold perish, and thy pleasures be turned into sorrow, and shall this God deliver thee? And all these are framed by man, that he may have ease and freedom elsewhere in the flesh, and have something to see and feel, that so he may live in peace; but the true God is found in trouble, not at the sound of Musick, but in woe and sighing; then is God present with these men; as,

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were accused by the Officers.

This added to their Captivity, for that herein is double bondage, though they were advanced as Rulers in *Babylon*, yet brings them into bondage; that they might not sit in *Babylon*, but upon their God and his Word; So that,

When God intends good unto man, he keeps him under the Rod of miserie without, and weaknesse within; that Faith may be kept pure, and the flesh and man may have no stay but in him.

Thus with *Job*, *David*, Psal. 107. 39. *He brings down their heart with sorrow*, thus with Christ.

1. For till man be thoroughly whipt, he flies to some new shift, and God in love chaseth him from all holds, that he may not settle in carnality.

2. For *Abraham* had no Child, then *Isaac* was born, and then

hope of him seemed to be taken away. This was ever Gods dealing with his Church, they had some breathing time; yet he renews his rod, when they grew wanton and turn from him: Man would lay hold in any thing, rather than drown; but thus God plungeth him into the deep, and then he prays.

1. Thus we all seek rest in the flesh, and find it; and say, We shall not be moved; the Pipe and the Tabret is in our Feasts, but sorrow and repentance is hid from us: But if God intend thee good, he will keep thee from fleshly ease. Thou thinks it an heavy bondage, to lose wife, husband, world and all; but when guilt shall appear within, and God is departed, and death at hand; who shall comfort thee?

2. But we are altogether for ease and peace; Our Church is fleshly. The Church in *Canticles*, sought and enquired after him in the night, but no such need with us; we feel not the grief and captivity of others. They are now full, *anon*, taken away; Now in health, *anon* stricken dead. Children cries, wives lament; husbands slain, none left to comfort them; but cruel enemies to make an end of them: which shewes the cursed strength of flesh, never well but under the rod. This made some run into Monasteries.

We are not careful. That is, we seek no shifts, but trust in our own God; and fear not the fire, nor afraid but God will deliver us; So that,

Faith only staying the heart, only Christ makes man bold again from death and miserie; and purgeth the heart from fear.

This was promised by Christ, Be not afraid; so the Midewives of *Egypt* feared not the King, seeing him that is Invisible. Thus the Martyrs not afraid to answer their Adversaries.

1. For it overcomes the World, gives joy in tribulation, after patience, experience; Isa. 58. *A Smith lifts not up a hammer, but by me.*

2. Man fears only so far, as he trusts himself or the creature.

3. Faith keeps the heart safe, whatever becomes of the flesh.

1. Now there is a fear natural, from Constitution.

2. A fear worldly, because we trust and love it.

3. A fear spiritual, either of wrath or judgement, or of fear in regard of himself and his own weaknesse and rebellion; but fear makes man believe.

1. Why doth man fear, but because he believes not? hence
our

our shrinking hearts; that when trouble approacheth, he deviseth and invents how to answer and escape and recover. For affliction indeed shakes all frothy faith, but purifieth the rest as gold.
2. But woe to the hardened hearts, that fear nothing, because the World is strong in our hearts, but like blind byard run into a pit.

3. See the safetie of believers, who have a friend at back; that when flesh pleads with *Saul* to *David*, thou art not able; and *Jonathans* man: they are manie judgeth not after outward appearance, but believes and waits for deliverance: Be not afraid, only believe.

4. And this is the Fountain of all, the careful life of an unbelieving man; alwayes caring to encrease theirs; to be delivered, because they trust not in him thats able.

Our God is able here, opposeth their God to the cumber and wrath of the King; we seek not thy favour nor life, nor ease: but our God whom we serve is our only stay; So that,

The believing heart, so far as he believes in Christ, and Christ in Him; in all extremities cries from a believing mind,
None but Christ.

Thus *Solomon* when he had tried all vanities; *Psal. 73. I have none in heaven, save only thee. Eliab* against *Baal*, *The Lord he is God*; And the Prodigal, *Father, I have sinned against thee, therefore I am no more worthy to be called thy Son. Phil. For we are the Circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

1. For there is he that giveth life in death.

2. They are one by faith, as the husband and the wife.

3. This is the Law accomplished by the Gospel, against the world, who worship one God, and trust in another; nay, all have any but thee. Faith is a simple thing separate from all; Christ only lives in man, and answers Satan with this, *Our God is able to deliver us*. If he see it best, He can; to which will we are subject and believe his power: yet, if he see it not good, we believe his power, He is able to uphold us in suffering; and we are pleased with his will whatsoever; So that,

So that simple believing of Gods power, and free subjection to his will in all things, is the only stay and hearts ease of man in trouble and misery.

As in *Abraham*, he believed that he was able to raise him

ap from the death, though he knew not that he would; in that he submitted to his will, Rom. 11. *Concerning Israel, God is able to graft them in again, and David, When he was driven by Absalom, God can bring me again to the Citie and Tabernacle, if not, here I am; let him do what seemeth him good: So saith the Leper, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean; and God can save by few as by many.*

For he that comes to God must first, believe that God is, that is to say, there is Power, and Truth, and Wisdom in him; who, by his Power commands the Heavens, and they were made; who causeth light to shine in darknesse, Thus he argues in *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, *Its I that measure the Sea in my hand.* He that made the Heavens and the Earth, that doth lead through the Fire and Water, and brings down to Hell and Death. And this he hath promised, that he will not leave man in distresse, but all shall turn to good.

So that, to denie all creatures and strength of man, and believe his power; to denie our selves, and be subject to his will is our only ease. For Christ so knew his Father was able to save him from that hour, yet was subject to his will, *not my will, but thine be done.* But Man hath a Will of his own, which God doth not alwayes answer according to his fleshly appearance, which man seeks to accomplish by his own; or, because man sees not alwayes a sign or way of deliverance in himself, he fears and thinks all is lost; when God in Wisdom hides all from him, and takes away all stayes in the flesh, that he may despaire in himself, and trust in another, and denie his will, that he may be made subject.

Thus, we all denie the Power of God, and think there can be no comfortable living in the World vvithout fulnesse of the World; nor that Wife and Children cannot live vvhen vve are gone, unlesse vve leave them full portions; but vvho fed *Elias*, and the Widdovv of *Sarepta*? vvho fed the Ravens and clothed the Lillies? Nay, vve do not see, that all the care and povver of man cannot make him prosper, vvhen Gods hand is against him: and do vve not see hovv many he raiseth out of the dust, and setteth them vvith Princes; and yet this vve trust more than him: If vve have friends and riches, vve believe; if not, vve fear, as though his povver vvas limited to this.

1. Nay, thus in the vvay of Religion, vve denie his povver and vvill needs help God, as that he cannot save us vvithout our help,

Works

Works, Wisdom, and Righteousnesse and these must be set up to look at, and we behold Christ through these, and Circumcision; and so we stand not as Beggers to receive of his fulnesse, but as Traders in Religion, to bring something unto him, as a thousand Rams.

2. But what safety to the Citie, if God watch not, or what ease by rising earlie, if God blesse not; so that none believes the power of God, but he that knows his own weaknesse, and of all creatures; For still God manifests his Power Wisdom, and Mercie in the Weaknesse, Foolishnesse, and Unworthinesse of Man, and this believing Gods Power, never more seen than in trouble: For while we are full, we believe, because of our fulnesse; but when all fails, then we denie him and limit him by, that we see, or feel; and hence, we denie him in our hearts: I shall never get out of this Miserie; I cannot tell what course to take, I see no help, I have no friends; the enemy is full of Wrath and Power, I cannot escape his hands.

Did he not put a Bridle in the Lips, and a Hook in the Nose of *Seuacherib*, slaying a thousand and fifteen hundred in one night: Hath he not Promised to give thee a Mouth and Wisdom; therefore thogh thou canst not tell what to do, commit all to him, and see what he can do: As we do in any trouble, when we are weary with striving, we give our matters to another, to make what end he will, and we are content: So do with him as *Job*, laying his hand on his mouth, and see what an end God made.

Obj. Yes, I know God is able, but yet I know not that he will.

Answ. In this nothing but subjection brings peace, for it is not our curious searching that finds it; We all lust to know and see, rather than to be subject to his Will in patience, We would all know the time when, and by what means; we would have it now and by Fire from Heaven; He hath promised and is able to supplie our wants, but we would know and feel it, and have it in abundance. Thus, Man would be a chief Lord in the Church, and leave nothing for Christ to do, he would have all things in his own hands, and yet for ought I know, when man hath most, he believes God the least; and when he hath most confidence in himself he hath least in God.

But these argued not with God, nor tempted him; but cast all upon him, he is able, and if he will, he can; and if not, his will be done. Thus man in strength of his own will fights against God

ayly; we pray, *Thy will be done*, but we never think of itd but rather that our wills might be accomplished, that His will might be the fulfilling of our lusts, rather than suffering want to believe Him. We professe that He will turn all to the good of of His, we believe not truth, for else how comes this murmuring in want; but we think nothing can turn good, but that wherein we find present good: We would know and feel all, but believe and suffer nothing.

And he will deliver us. They stick to the Promise, and are delivered; So that,

Faith and sticking to the Word of Promise, gives assurance and frees man, when all else fails.

Be it known. However He do, yet we will not forsake Him; So that,

The believing heart willingly suffers all miserie, rather than forsake God, or trust any, but Christ.

As Paul, *For I am not only readie to be bound, but to suffer all things.*

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury; When he saw his power contemned, his will crossed, his glory thus opposed by these, and of another which he saw not, nor believed; his rage was kindled, and he grew mad, and commanded the furnace to be made seven times hotter than before; So that,

The way of Faith doth most cross the power and wisdom of the world, of any thing; and therefore doth the World cast it off, and grows furious and mad against it.

John preached Repentance, and they cast him into prison because he told them, that their high mountains must be cast down; and that in that way they could not be saved. Christ preached faith, to the convincing of the world, that they should believe, and they look at nothing but Him; *And they hated the light, because their deeds were evil*: Therefore, were they mad against Him. *Paul* preached Salvation by Christ, and overthrew circumcision, and they stoned Him. And so the elder brother, the prodigal; *Luther* preached free justification by faith, without the righteousness of man, and the whole army of *Antichrist* was up in arms against him. So these stick to God, and the King is furious.

1. For this leaves nothing for the heart to fix upon, but Christ, a thing unknown to flesh and blood: If man would fasten

fasten on the world and rest there, Christ shews it is a vain and broken staff, and that a mans life stands not in that, for moths corrupt it; and as the rich man builded his barnes, this night will they fetch away thy soul: So that the worlding hates it in his heart.

2. If man will fasten on his righteousness, and knowledge, opinion, or any qualitie, Christ beats it down, and *Paul* makes it worse than nothing, and leavs all under sin: And so the wise and righteous men are alwayes the greatest enemies to Christ; for they think much that all that which they have gotten with such labor and cost should serve for nothing: For man would have a life out of all things, but flees death in all things.

3. Nay if man think to store up joy and peace and ease by believing, and so make his mountain strong, by his revelations, gifts, and great joyes. Yet then Christ also comes with darknesse and sufferings, and seems to forsake these men; and this makes the stonny ground to fall off; and these for a time rejoiced in his light, but forsakes him after: So that, Christ may well say, *who hath believed our report? for of all other things this is least welcome to man*: Nay, all hearts rise against it, but he that is down already. The Worlding is tyed in his lust, and worldly confidence, and his ears stopped, and his heart riseth against it; for he would sit at ease and enjoy his portion: So also the righteous and religious man, that excelleth others, and professeth Christ; yet lives by circumcision: He storms and argues and disputes against it, and gets strong conceits and opinions to joyn the world, and ease, and Christ together, and none embraceth it, but the poor and miserable heart.

S E R M O N X V I.

Jeremiah 48. 34. 56. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel to thee, O Baruch; thou didst say, Woe is me now, for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, I faint in my sighing, and I find no rest: Thus shalt thou say unto him, The Lord saith thus, That which I have builded, I will break down, and that which I have planted, I will pluck up: even this whole land.

THese are the words of the Lord to Baruch by Jeremiah, to comfort him in the heaviness of his soul,

because of the present persecution of the King and people of *Judea* against the word of the Lord, and the Book which he had written, from *Jeremiah*: As also, for the ensuing captivitie which he saw: He expected peace and ease, when he had read the book to them; but for that they persecuted both *Jeremiah* and him: He looked they would have repented, but they are more hardened, and he hath lesse hopes than before; Upon which,

1. The Lord comforts him by the Prophet; wherein *Baruchs* sorrow and grief is renewed and multiplied, and he left without any hope of ease or rest.

2. The Lord comforts him in his heavinesse, he renews his threatnings against *Judea*, that *He will pull and pluck up that which He hath planted*; he shews wherein is the cause of his sorrow, because *he sought great things for himself*.

3. A promise of safety, when evil shall fall upon all flesh; yet life shall be given him for a prey. *woe is me now*. What is the grief of *Israel*, had *Baruch* the book, and cast the Word of the Lord away, and hardened himself in his clear sight revealed; so that judgement must come? So that,

No sure sign of judgement, than of hardnesse of heart under the clear sight of the Gospel of Christ, Luke 13. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: How often would I have gathered you together, as the hen gathereth her brood under her wings; and ye would not? Mat.*

22. The unthankful guests were bidden, but hardened against it. This is the abasing of his long-suffering through hardnesse of heart that cannot repent, and yet judging others; as the unthankful servant, that eateth and drinketh with drunkards. In such securitie was *Israel* fallen now, for which *Baruch* mourned, that they cast off the words of *Jeremiah*, saying; It is false, and God would not cast off his; And so follow the Idols and Imaginations of their wicked hearts. This is the turning of Grace into Wantonnesse, like those in *Judea*, for which judgement was prepared; they fed their bellies, and filled their purses by the Gospel, but not souls with Faith and Love. And it is a sign of death when Physick workes not, but that the disease grows strong against it; so of the soul, when the Word of Life prevails not.

This is a casting off God, whose goodnesse we have felt; so
that

that, now we live of our selves, to worke our own peace, procure life, prevent danger; for that is not now called to for counsel, nor is help called for as of old: and this is the hardnesse whereinto we are all fallen, as woeful experience shews: And this is the condemnation, *That light is come into the world, and men love darknesse rather than light, John 3.* and this appears, when sin and rebellion is the same or the greater, and yet lesse burdensome, and evil than before. When knowledge of the Gospel hath shut up repentance from the heart, and pride hath drowned humility and love in himself, when God of His Judgements are not feared nor felt; but we put the evil day far off when iniquity is grown great and impudent; and become as ordinarie as our trades and callings are with us. Now the time was, when the disciples of Christ, and Apostles flocked in abundance and left all, as *Alexander and Demas*; but after a while they hardened and fell to the World and ease thereof. The *Galatians* would have plucked out their eyes, but after turned enemies in legal righteoulnesse, but we to dead securitie, even thus with us: Time was, when the Word was precious, and prevailed to rule in us; but now we can abide it through wit and fore-knowledge, and sleep quietly.

1. But well worth tender hearts who eat and live by the Word, whether it speak life or death; it prevails above all: and hence see the greatest provocation that ever was raised against God, whereby His own people had tasted of His love, and grown wanton in the flesh, and more fearful judgement fell upon them.

So now, the silly ignorant wretch, when he hears but of any judgement, he trembles and blesteth himself after his own poor fighting fashion; but the wise and great devote ones they mock him, and say, Tush, this is nothing, we shall escape it, and call his word a lye; so that we may justly fear the sequell of these fearful signs, these more certain signs, than in Sun and Moon: For where is the mourning, weeping, and repenting heart? Where is the lowly, believing mind, that joyes in tribulation? Where is the open, loving, single heart without respect.

Well, nay, we cry, Woe is me now, for *Israel* hath cast off the Lord, and we fight against His Word; our long peace hath made

us secure. The Word and Works of God are become a dallying to us, and we sing peace, peace, and yet forsake the way and despise the Kingdom of peace.

God hath added grief to my sorrow. New grief to my old sorrow, one grief after another, that I find no rest; though I faint in my fighting, see Gods dealing; So that,

God usually tryes his to the bottom, and adds one affliction to another, to all which he loves, and suffers them not to find any ease and rest in the flesh.

As with *Job*, Psal. 78. *He brought down their hearts with sorrows*, Psal. 77. *He wept all night*. Thus *Paul* had fightings and terrors; thus *Christ*, and the Martyrs even persecuted unto strange Cities; thus *Abraham* nothing left, Psal. 4. *One deep calls another*; thus the wayes of *Christ*, and our conformitie to his death; For untill man be thoroughly whipt, and beat under, he runs to some new shift.

1. And so God in love chafeth him from all holes, as *Abraham*, though he was brought from his Countrey, yet he had no Children, then was *Isaac* given; then he had hope in the flesh, but he took that away.

2. Thus was Gods dealing with the Church, though they had some breathings given; yet, when the flesh began to grow wanton and rejoyce, and so they forget and turn from the God of their Life, then he sent his Rod to waken them, that they might not settle on their fleshly ease.

3. Thus will God worke good out of evil, He lets Satan loose to whip and torment his for the destruction of the flesh.

4. Man will lay hold upon any thing before he drown, yea, even a Leafe, or Reed, but God plungeth him into the deep, and then he cries, and is heard.

5. Light afflictions makes man more wise and wilily to escape in the flesh; but sound and deep grief added to sorrow brings down the heart, and makes him pray: Thus we see all seeks rest in the flesh, and we have gotten the World to feed us, and Religion to cover us, in prosperitie and peace; and say, Soul take thine ease, and sit as a Queen, and say, We shall not be moved.

We add joy to mirth, the Pipe and Tabret is in our Feasts, we drink and care, and laugh in the midst of our sinning, but Sorrow and Repentance is hid from us; We have not resisted unto blood

blood, nor affliction hath taken us, but such as with a little time of Wisdom could remove, or at least forget.

1. But know, if God intend thee good, he will add grief to thy sorrow: Thou thinks it a heavie thing, to lose Father, Husband, or Wife; but it will be a heavier thing to feel the burden of thy Spirit, when God hath turned his Face away, and taken all from thee; that thou feelest nothing but guilt within, and death approaching, and yet God absent; Then will grief be added to sorrow: Who then shall comfort thee?

2. Thus the Faith of our Church is all fleshly; fleshly joy, prosperitie, ease, the Spouse of Christ, Canticles 1. *Is black; and her Locks wett with dew in seeking her beloved in the night, and with weeping in the streets,* but no such enquirie with us. Others indure grief upon grief: Now full, anon taken away; now in peace, anon Drumming, and Cannons roaring in the streets; now in Health and Lustie, anon struck dead in an instant: Children crying, Wives bemoaning, Maids ravisht; Fathers and Husbands slain, and none to comfort them; but unrully Souldiers to spoil them: These are dayes and places of Prayer: No ease in the flesh, but crying in the Spirit.

3. We see also the springing corruption of man, like the springing-Willow, by the water side; cut it now, and it shoots out the next spring.

4. So that believers needs abundance of purging through affliction: For still we retain something, and gathers some hope from thence; and so flesh still renews again.

This was it I think, which led some honest minds to betake themselves to such austere living; thinking thereby to tame the flesh; and voluntarily denying fleshly ease, but yet it sprung up under a more spiritual form; but in a greater mistery of wickednesse: For, look how far a man afflicts himself, he is able to comfort himself: but if God add grief to thy sorrow, and lay it on indeed, it will fetch tears, yea, blood.

5. The way of man never sorrows till it be kindly, such as all flesh cannot ease; it was so with thee once, and why not now? It is but a light and fleshy sorrow for want of ease, that is eased by any thing in man; but a wounded spirit who can bear? but we take wounded flesh for spirit: For that is, when a spirit is wounded

ded with guilt and want, because it hath followed and believed the flesh, and then as here is no way seen for recoverie, but fighting and fainting therein, till God beyond hope, come.

I will pull down that which I have builded. He will cast *Israel* away, whom He once choose for His only people; *I will send them into Babylon*, whom He appointed to dwell in *Canaan*, and to worship in *Jerusalem*, and all because their hearts were lifted against Him in their imaginations: So that now He will pluck up all, that He may cast down their vain confidence, because they were hardened in securitie, and lifted up in pride; So that.

God will certainly destroy and cast out the fairest gift given to man, vwhen mans heart is lifted up thereby, and hardened therein.

Thus He pulled down the confidence *Israel* had in the Ark; Thus He brings down *David's* high mountain, and *Paul's* rebellions; this vvas *John's* office to destroy high mountains: *Paul* had confidence in the flesh, but God laid it in the dust: So that after he confest, *That in me dwells no good thing*, but is given only by Christ, in such humility and baseness, that man might not be lifted up, his kingdom not be here: He arrogated nothing to Himself, but to His father, *Not mine, but him that sent me.*

1. For Christ vwill pull down all other kingdoms, that He may erect His ovvn, as in *Daniel*; the kingdoms vanished one after another. This is the stone heven out of the rock vwithout hands; and therefore Christ came to destroy the kingdom that the lavv had builded in man, and to convince the world of sin, because of righteousness vvhich they had established; of judgement, because the Prince of this World judged falsly of Him.

2. For man is cloathed in his gifts, as the Angels; and became strong and vvise vwithout God: He hath built him a city, provided a portion, vvorking righteousness, full of knowvledge, a God in his ovvn eyes; but God vwill pull all these down that he may be God.

3. The vveapons of our vvarfare are mighty through Him to pull down strong holds, not through our selves: And this he doth by the power of the vvord, It is a mighty voice, and thereby
lays

layes low all mans thoughts for the present, and by the Crosse kindly together.

4. All gifts that God gives to man are to shew his power and love, for the good of others; not to make them the Idols of our own hearts, and say, *These are thy Gods; O Israel.*

1. Woe then to the Pride of man, who is lifted up by every gift; exalts himself, judgeth others, despiseth the weak; but such boasting must down; yea, whatever God gives them, he will take it again if you begin to store it up.

2. It is a great point of simplicitie of heart, in the fulnesse of all gifts the heart be lov'd, and lifted up by none; when he hath seen all secure, he seeth none: and enjoyeth freedom, yet walks in fear; as the Child, though he want nothing, yet he hath nothing properly his own: God is and will be the keeper of his own gifts, which we put into the hands of flesh; O! therefore, lay your foundation on a Kingdom.

3. But know there will come a pulling down, as to *Israel*, when they sate by the Rivers of Babylon: What foolishnesse, when it is us that build and plants, and gathers and makes sure that which must be cut down and scattered? when thy mouth shall be filled with gravel, thy portion scattered, thy honour buried in dust; thy strong confidence perisheth, thy Soul carried into the land of darknesse.

4. See the perverie heart of Man, and strength of fleshly heart, Who the more God bestows on him, the lesse he cares for him; like an unroward, Child keep him bare in Faith and dependance of his Fathers love, and he prays, and believes, and is obedient; but fill his hand, and let him have his Lust, he sets his Father and Mother at nought: Yea, thus the Flesh makes advantage of the most excellent gifts; as here, even the joy, peace, and assurance God gives man; for man retains nothing, but is lifted up by it.

And believes that it is God, but not man more humble and low to see his own vilenesse, saying, *What is man, that thou regardest him?*

Doest thou seek great things for thy self, seek them not. Thou mourns and weeps, that this desolation must come, It is because thou finds ease and peace, and great matters; no, all shall be taken away: Seek them not, for this is the cause why thou art so troubled

troubled ; thy fleshlie lusting , not throughly mortified and prepared in faith and patience to wait : So that,

The main ground of all our miserie and sorrow is , our lasting expectation of great ease and peace in the flesh, not faithfullie prepared to be subject to Gods will , or content with his present portion.

David looks that *Absolom* should be spared above all, and therefore was so grieved at his death ; yea, more than at the death of all the rest. *Peter* expected to have his life; and continue there in peace ; therefore so wist'ing, that *Christ* should not go up to *Jerusalem* , when *Hezekiah* had overcome *Senacharib* ; he thought he should live in peace , which made the message of death so heavy, Luk. 12. *He said, Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years ; Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry : therefore death was that night so fearful.*

1. Thus we see in experience, and say ; I was finelie set, I had paid my debt, gotten a good portion ; built an house, provided for wife and children in a good way of thriving , and verie like to have risen; and now all is gone. For look how far the heart is lifted up in experience, so far it is cast down in the want of any thing.

2. Lust leads out the mind beyond present state, and sets a seeking great things , not content with present ; and so both wanders in desires and uncertain hopes ; and when they have gotten them with much toil , they are left in a moment , and he laid in the dust.

3. This deprives man of present good and what he hath , because of the want and expectation of what he would have. But subjection is necessarie in all estates , thus we are carried still in expectation of great matters , that we forget the present one, of great riches, and certain inheritance for himself and his ; and it may be; he or they dies a beggar.

Another of great joy and comfort , and good will ; keeps low his heart in sorrow. All expects a mending of their condition, which till it come, they pine and languish : The way of rest is to walk faithfullie for the present, and reserve the issue unto God.

S E R M O N X V I I .

Isa. 64. 6, 7. *But we are all as an unclean thing; all our righteousnesses are as filthy raggs, and we all do fade as chaffe or a leaf; and our Iniquities like the wind have taken us away.*

IN this Chapter is laid down the earnest desire of the Prophet, for taking away their rebellion and healing their pride and secnrity; that so the judgement might be removed: wherein by a Metaphor, that nothing can reform *I-
srael* but God; descending by his power, and bringing down their high mountain. For he acknowledgeth that God is faithful and wonderful in his mercy to them that wait for him, and seek him in his way; for whom he hath done such great things as were never heard of, and then confesseth where the fault lyes.

In the former verse he shewes, how ready God is to meet him that rejoyceth and worketh righteousness in his way, and that yet now he is wroth, because they have sinned: but that in his way there is continuance of his mercy and goodness; and that man walking constantly therein, shall be saved.

Then in the sixth verse, a map and a plain description of mans estate without God; and that is laid down,

1. Generally in their natural disposition, as *filthy raggs*.
2. In their holiness or devotion, *all our righteousnesses are as filthy raggs*.
3. In their failing and fading in all goodness, like a *leaf*.
4. In their miserie, their *Iniquities like wind takes them away*.
5. In their hardness, none calleth upon thy Name, or stirreth himself to take hold of thee.
6. Gods absence from them, because of their *Iniquities*.
7. And last, they commit themselves to God in submission, as clay to the Potter; and so after, cries for mercy and reconciliation, and of restoring their captivity; In those is continuance, and we shall *be saved*: In thy way there is safety and continuance of comfort, if we had hearts to continue faithful therein. *But we are*: So that,

Mercy

Mercy, Love and Truth are a continual act in God, and never fails to man; but when man turns to himself and his own wayes.

But if man could continue constant in faith, he should be preserved in all dangers, *His mercy endureth for ever, and his truth from generation to generation, &c. Mic. 6. Israel testifie against me, wherein have I been wanting or failed thee.* How did he continue his love to Israel? though they sinned, yet he continued a Father; though we sin, yet he abides faithful. *Christ continues ever a faithful High Priest, and never ceaseth to make Intercession.*

1. For with him there is no shadow of turning; he changeth not as man; God is not yea and nay; as a man in war with his enemies: who hath a Captain wise and puissant to overcome, if they bear their station and fight in confidence; But if he out of his pride and infidelity run out into a way of his own, and trust his own devices, shall fall. It was, because he stayed not with the Captain; so it is with us, because we stay not with him, but run after some lust or device, and think to prosper, which skill fails. For when *Israel* stuck to the Covenant, and endured hunger and thirst; and drunk bitter waters, and waited on him in his way, they prospered: But when they began to lust, and turned from him, they fell through Infidelity.

2. For no length of time nor work of man, can alter him or his word; but man running from him, deprives himself.

3. For it was *Adams* running from God, and the Prodigal from his Father; and the *Apostates*, for denying and forsaking the faith; that was their undoing.

1. Hence we see, why our joy and peace continueth not, viz. because we continue not faithful in sticking to him; But,

1. Either blesse our selves with hearing of Redemption, and yet live by the world and the flesh.

2. Or tasting of the joy and freedom in the way of faith, thinks all is perfected, and lives not by faith, but the World creeps in.

3. Or receiving joy and assurance from God, thinks to store it up in our selves; which was *Adam's* sin: For he that thinks to store up faith and love, &c. in himself; and thereby to please God, or to receive from God, is deceived. For there is faithfulness in God, and continuance in God, but not in man: So that, here is our error, we think to store up these by wit and diligence and by faith; for there is no continuance or keeping of holinesse in man, but in Christ

Christ; for He is our Holinesse and Redemption. Charge not God then, as those in *Isaiah* 58. as though He failed; for there is no failing in Him, but condemn thy self: And yet God chargeth not man as though he had been a wanting to him, *Isaiah* 1. as though man can do any thing to Him; but because we are not fit to receive, *O that my people would have heard*: Because he hath not an ear to hear, and a heart to receive what God would bestow on him: Being fore-stalled with a conceit of his own guifts, the sin of the Angels.

3. Hence we see, how hard it is for man to continue in any good way: with God is continuance, man failes oft, for man is lothe to ly in the dust still, and to suffer affliction, and mourn, but he will have some merry dayes; and if God give it not, he flies to the world, and seeks it there: And yet we know that man never finds life but in death, and *Paul* never rejoiced so much as in infirmities; which argues, we are abundance of flesh, but little spirit; for one hour that we live in the misery of own spirits, we live ten in pleasure or hopes of the flesh.

But we are all as unclean things. He confesseth what man is, without God, viz.

That man separated from God, and not guided by Him, is but vilenesse and vanitie; a lump of filthinesse, and good for nothing, till he be restored by meer mercy, and made subject to God, and live in Christ: *Psal.* 6. *what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* In us dwells no good thing, man is a thing of nought; *Rom.* 3. *Their throat is an open sepulchre,* &c. no stedfastnesse in the Angels, and who can say, My heart is clean? So *David*, *Psal.* 5. *Daniel* 9. confesse what man is.

1. For God is the life, soul, and beeing of all creatures, and none lives but by Him; none but men and devils, but are subject to Him, and obey His will; only man hath a will of his own which he would have to reign as God.

2. This is the common eye of the world: what malice and ranchour, not the like among brute creatures; even minds to devour one another, wrong, murder, covetousnesse, pride, lusts, and all evil is committed amongst men, but all flowing out of this pit.

3. Nay the experieuce of every heart, understanding it self, sees it; dost thou not find in thy self a heart stuffed with pride, vain glory, lust, and filthy desires, that if the world did but know them thou wart ashamed for ever?

4. And that which makes him worst of all, this beggar will needs sit on horse-back, and boast and proclaim himself to be some body.

1. But if mans eye were turne d homeward, we should have no boasting; where thou may see in thy self the sins of all men in the world, *Pharaoh's* hardnesse, *Cain's* murder, *Saul's* doubling, *Judas* treason, the fooles worlding; for we do the will and lust of the devil.

2. So that all thy good thoughts of thy self are from the devil, the father of lies; nay, when ever thou medles with any thing that is good, if it be not God that workes in thee, thou marrs it. Thou talks of Religion from a proud heart, and makes Religion to stink: thou prayes out of a rotten heart, out of self-love for ease, and it is abominable, &c.

3. O that man saw the filthinesse of his own heart! What a base thing he is? It would both bring down his high thoughts of himself, and make him charitable to others.

1. Whence then is all this exalting of our selves above others, as thinking we have some excellent gifts above others? is it not because we know not our selves.

2. Whence is this seeking of glory one of another? but because we know not our vilenesse; we are lothe to see any ill in our selves, and thence so many excuses.

3. Whence is this judging and censuring of others? but because we think well of our selves.

Object. But God hath given excellent gifts to men, as Knowledge, Wit, Joy, Comfort, Faith, and Love, &c.

Answer. This declares the goodnesse of God, not of man, this rests in God, not in man; this makes not man better in himself, but shewes that God is better to him; for when man chokes himself with conceits of Gods gifts as his own, he becomes proud. True it is, God restrains and orders man for good of others but if he take good to himself, he is deceived.

4. Where then are all these good qualities that man brags of? True it is, for matters pollitical, God hath given gifts and fitnesse to man; but for the Kingdom of Christ there is no power, no fitnesse: all power is in Him, both in heaven and earth: For as in a Kingdom there is no power, no will but in the King, so in this; so that we greatly err in our conceits.

We think Faith is a vertue, and qualitie, and power in man; but

but it is indeed the weakness of man trusting in another, when the weak, dead, and beggerly heart of man flies to and lives in another; so that, there is no goodnesse in man, but sight of vilenesse, &c.

5. O! how much need we then to stand in need of mercie who who are vile, filthy, and rebellious?

6. And magnifie we Gods mercie and love, that on us, so vile, and wretched, hath shewed mercie, & still keeps and preserves us.

And all our righteousness is as filthy rags. 1. Here he shews, what man is naturally, in the general nature of man; and here he shews what he is in his better reformed qualities of Righteousnesse and Holinesse; wherein he labours to bring down the high conceits of the *Jews*: Who accounted themselves the onlie Holie and Religious People; and that therefore, God would carrie them into Captivie: But he tells them, that even all their righteousness, that they boast off, in respect of God, is nothing but filthinesse and vanitie; and so the Righteousnesse and Holinesse of the most perfect man, where'by he labours to root out of man two things.

1. The conceits of all Righteousnesse in himself, and so pride and boasting, that man may know himself. 2. All Righteousnesse before God; But

1. For first, he doth not draw man from Righteousnesse; but from the opinion of Righteousnesse.

2. He speaks not of Righteousnesse towards man, but towards God; So that,

Mans best Righteousnesse, and perfection of Holinesse with God, and before him; as also all mans conceits of Gods love and blessing in respect thereof, is nothing but filthinesse, and iniquitie, not able to uphold his heart, or preserve his peace in fyrie tryals.

No stedfastnesse in Angels, *Paul* counted all losse and drosse, *Psalm* 16. *My goodnesse extends not unto thee*, when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants *Isaiah* 66. *Their righteousness is like the cutting off a dogs neck*; where there was not a humble and contrite Spirit.

1. For the whole depraved nature of man is a like lust in all; and the restoring of Righteousnesse is, as man is; and abides in Christ, not as he is partaker of new qualities in himself, for Christ is the bringer in of everlasting Righteousnesse, and the King of Righteousnesse.

2. This doctrine stablisheth and preserveth Faith in the

Church and heart of man; but mans righteousness destroyeth Faith, but Faith establisheth the Righteousnesse of God, and it is called the Righteousnesse of God, an infinite Righteousnesse, which swallows up all sin in a moment, so that Righteousnesse is preserved by Faith.

3. Faith by Righteousnesse, a Christian is not righteous *formaliter*, according to his substance or quality; but *creatum praedictum ad aliquam*: In respect of the divine grace, and free remission of sin, Psal. 32. *Blessed is he whose unrighteousnesse is forgiven*, and not who is made habitually righteous.

4. Mans righteousness is in another, *viz.* in Christ, who is made our Righteousnesse through Grace: For take Him away, and there rests nothing but death; for the Law doth not make man righteous, but sinners and lost men.

Now Righteousnesse is two-fold, $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Politia \\ divina, \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} Morale \\ divinum. \end{array} \right\}$ The first is that the

Philosophers treat of, which is a Righteousnesse of just and equal disposition of mind and carriage of our actions towards others, doing right to all: That is called in Scripture the Righteousnesse of the Law, which is the righteous work of it in man; but that is nothing before God, for it is not wrought by God, nor for him, but man attributes it to himself, and thinks God should be pleased therewith also. Now this is good and sweet amongst men, but if man bring this before God, it is abominable.

But the righteousness of Faith is another thing, *viz.* the righteousness of Christ made ours, standing in free remission of sins and the free grace of God: Therefore it is, that Christ is our Righteousnesse, as a thing out of mans self in another.

1. How far off from life are they then which walk unrighteously in all things, both towards God and man.

2. Also those that hold the Truth in unrighteousnesse, which acknowledge the Truth of the Gospel; but submits not to the righteousness thereof, but run out after their own unrighteousnesse, and will never regard God nor his word of promise.

3. And

3. And such as makes themselves righteous, and stablish a righteousness of their own, and thence seek a ground of believing.

4. Others fall off from the Faith with the *Galatians*, and when God, through His love, hath made them sometimes obedient in love.

1. Fix their eyes upon that, and imagine themselves something, and that now they being made subject and obedient, do look for a blessing thereupon; when, alace! it is not one good thought of twenty.

2. But know, that all our Righteousness is in another, that man see no good thing in himself, but Sin and Rebellion, and Death, &c. but all good in Christ, Who is made our Righteousness: For if man turn from Him, he fails, if he abide in Him, he lives; Therefore as *Paul* saith, *I live not, but Christ lives in me.*

3. But most lives by conceit of Christ, not Christ living in them; so that our power over sin, death, and hell, is not in our selves, but in Christ, who daily crucifies the world; not any qualitie or disposition that we are brought to, but living in the sense of our own unrighteousness, and flying from our selves, and so becomes Righteous in Christ.

4. Hence we see, that Faith, and all good is preserved to man, in daily and deep humilitie, when he daily lives in the life of Repentance, and is weak, and unrighteous, and unthankful; but daily waits for mercy: But when man becomes righteous in his own eyes, either because of that qualitie of Faith, or of Love, or Righteousness; then he is lifted up, and it becomes his own righteousness, and therefore filthie and nothing.

5. Walk in Righteousness, but take heed of looking at it; let it extend to man, that thou mayest justify thy self before them, else all the world shall condemn thee, and the Gospel be slandered, but in respect of God, who is of pure eyes; bring nothing but Christ and His mercy, and then shall we see the Righteousness of God upon us.

And we all do fade as a leaf. All our Righteousness being but hypocritical; and so we with it doth fall to nothing; So that.

Where the Grace and Love of God by Faith, is not continued to man, there Faith and all Religion fades, and where

where Religion fades, there all joy and peace and happiness is lost, and comes to nothing; as Heb. 6. *They tasted of the good word of God, but yet fell away in the end; and Hymeneus and Philetus, and those in Jude; and Ephesus and Laodicea, Revel. 2. 3.*

1. For it is God only, that both by his grace both guides and preserves faith in man, *As the tree planted by the Rivers of water, Psal. 1.*

2. When this fades, man departs from God, as *Israel* in the Wilderness, and so never comes into the land of rest.

3. All things have a passage through man, and he gets a taste of good in them, but they fade in time; only Gods love and mercy endures for ever.

4. When man returns into himself or the World, he soon grows weary; as the leaf, when the sap is descended into the root in the earth; so we, when the sap of God is descended.

1. Hence it is, that so much fair shining Religion comes to nought in the end, being but the work of man, it fades and dies in man; but that of God abides for ever. Thus have we seen much Religion dye; What zeal and sorrow of heart? What love and affection to the truth it self? and now all is drowned up with a fleshly speculation of these things, but the life is gone,

1. Love is forcible, which if it rise but out of a strong stirring of natural affection it is soon lost; but if from real miserie and distrust of himself, it abides with God, though clouded; but the foundation abides in God.

2. And even so will all our joy and peace and freedom fade: Where is that joy and sweet rest we have had, that earnest hunger and desire after Christ? Nay, it is gone, and we grown proud in knowledge; and for the simplicity of believing, turned it into an opinion of knowing; edifying one another in love into fleshlie honour, seeking it one of another, or censuring each other, or love and liking of the Word of Truth, into a judging and despising of the same: our love to each other into self-love, our love to Religion, into the love of the World. So that, hence it is, that our joy is departed from us, because we are departed from Christ: We joy in our fulnesse, power or knowledge, &c. yet will all fade as a leafe; and we also shall in the end fade with it, we see it. Where is the glorie and pleasure and fulnesse of our neighbours

bours? is it not faded away, and turned into want and sorrow, and death it self? the youth and suckling, strong and aged, mother and child are all fallen into the dust; and it will be our portion, if righteousness and religion lye in the streets despised as it is.

And our Iniquities like the wind hath taken us away. When we thought under a colour of righteousness to go on in the wayes of vanitie, and enjoy the World; yet at last, our Iniquities have prevailed and taken us away: So that,

It is sin and rebellion against God which is the onlie way and cause of the destruction of man, and nothing but sin undoes man.

Your Iniquities have separated betwixt God and you. Thus he complains against *Israel* in all the Prophets, because they sinned against me; and yet they sinned more and more, they are a stiff necked generation: for nothing makes God our enemy, but our running from him.

2. Losse and want never hurts man, but this perverts the mind.

3. Nay, this makes a man a slave to Satan, lusts and to worldlie vanitie which he secures all his life, and then dies, and they forsake him. Now this iniquitie above all was their Infidelitie and pride, denying God and Christ.

1. Thus are we all in miserie and bondage and sees it not; nay, account this our happinesse, and rejoyce therein: We feel want of the world, riches and honour; but of the Word of Truth no want at all: but that wherein we most delight, shall be our overthrow.

2. Thus hath he dealt with our Land and Nation, it hath swept away whole Families and Towns, and yet we regard it not. For it is this that sets all plagues on fire.

3. We cry out under plague and death; O, when will this ill weather cease? But when wilt thou leave sinning against God?

S E R M O N XVIII.

Isa. 65. 2. 3. 4. I was sought of them that asked not after me, I was found of them that sought me not; and I said, Behold me, Behold me, to a Nation that called not upon my Name.

IN this Chapter is laid down the calling of the *Gentiles*, and the rejection of the *Jewes*; the freeness of Gods mercy to the one, and the righteousness of his judgements to the other: Shewing the constant dealing of God in his Church, calling in by the Word of Truth such as have been aliens and enemies thereto, and casting off such as have enjoyed it; yet walks stubbornly in pride after their own wayes.

The *Jewes* were a people particularly chosen to God by a special Covenant, and preserved by his power, according to his promise: But the *Gentiles* were Heathen aliens and Idolaters, who walked every one after his own way; that had nothing to do with the Covenant and special blessing: Not that they were restrained from enjoying happiness, but that none should be blessed, but that cleaveth to the God of *Israel* and became a *Jew*. These were turned from their own wayes to Gods, others fell from God to their own; for they retained his Word and way before them, yet did cleave to their own wits and wills; and thereby would accomplish his righteousness. The *Gentiles* enquired not after, nor sought God, till he sent his servants with the Word of Truth to them; finding them in their Idolatry and vain wayes: said,

Behold me, Behold me. For though some in all Ages were called in, because the Word light on them; yet this was the general and ordinary work: So that,

See by that way that seems most unlike to mans Wisdom, and most opposite to mans carnal Judgement, doth God worke and stablish His Kingdom, and mans happiness; that his Power and freeness of His Grace may appear.

For they were grafted in contrary to Nature, so that all his Works are contrary to Nature; for though he destroy not Nature

Nature from its being , yet he destroyes the Life and Kingdom that seeks in the creature without him : So that , so long as man runs after his natural Inclination , as we all do ; he wanders from Gods way therein. For what an unlikely way is it to reason , that by dying we shall live , and by losing life , we shall find it ; and by suffering , get the victorie : Not that by dying in our selves , we shall live in our selves , but in another.

How unlike , that *Abraham* an Idolater should become the Father of the faithful ? For he sought not nor enquired after him , yet God called and he obeyed ; And *Paul* , the great enemy of Christ , yet was made the great Champion of Christ.

Christs way of suffering , is a way few do willingly embrace ; We professe Christ and talks of Christ , but we seek other wayes to come by it , and keep this only alive in conceit ; like a hollow hearted friend ; who bears fair and speaks well , but when it comes to it , will part with nothing. Thus *Paul* confounded all those reasonable wayes of the false Apostles , and of their knowledge and righteousness , &c. and brings all to simplicity of Babes and helpless hearts ; for they kept all alive in conceit , but their hearts covered.

1. Thus God makes man a depending creature , to wait only on his Power and Grace.

2. All the wayes of God are wonderful to a believing heart , but whatever is within compasse of reason is not wonderful.

3. This he doth , that he may hide pride from man ; for so the *Jews* were grown haughtie when they had left his way of Faith , and wrought their own safety : For that way that man thinks to get life by devising , he shall not. Man grows wise to believe by it , and righteous to believe from it , and humble that he may gain the promise. But here simplicity of heart is lost : This is not the way but by being a fool , and sinner in himself ; then he is found.

Now this is abused by hardnesse of mens hearts , who therefore cast off fear , and faith , God will find me if I seek him not ; and be merciful though I seek him not , and follow not so hard after him ; and so muffled in securitie , because he saith , He can do nothing ; this is the plead of a senselesse heart in securitie ; he saith , He can do nothing , abusing his absolute power and freeness of his mercy.

But

But I may say, Have they not heard? Yes, the sound is gone through the World, so with thee: Hath he not sought thee, and called thee daily, and yet thou hardens thy heart against him? Thou hast not sought him, but he thee; and yet thou hidest thy self from him all thou canst.

Thus doth every believing heart that knows himself, find in experience the wonderful power and mercy in Christ, when thou wast wallowing in thy gored blood; yea, following the sway of of thine own will: yea, feeding thy heart with fleshly pleasures; then God knocketh at thy heart, when thou little thinks of him; nay, ever since, when thou felt nothing but guilt and death, and saw no other reason, yet then he gave life.

Nay, when thou had in strength of wisdom, not from a troubled heart; thought to establish thy thought of happinesse: yet he beat thee down. Yea, when thou thought thy self in the likeliest way to become happie, then proved it most cursed; & when thou seems most wretched, it becomes ever best from him: And all this God hath done, that thou mightest for ever believe him, who hath chosen and called thee one; thou knowest most vile, rebel, lustful, covetous, unlikeliest of thousands.

This confounds all the reasonable wayes of fair projects which man hath framed to himself, either out of the world, or out of Religion to establish his thoughts of ease and happinesse; for we see the offers of grace and his great works, and then reasons *a posteriore*; and thinks to ascend thence to happinesse. But his grace is free out of our compasse, and it is to be attended on.

We would know a reason of God in all his works, else we hold him not just. But what reason is it that ever the *Gentiles* should believe but his mercy?

And thus, all Religion almost is but the fruit of mans witt and brain, and not of a troubled heart, but for an end of mans self. Gods mercy is simple; and his works simple also; but all Religion that hath an end in mans heart towards man, is not of God simple.

So man is busie in seeking and working to make himself rich, searching & knowing to become wise & glorious: Nay, man labours to mortifie the flesh, to get life thereby; but mortification to daily dying is life, but to get life thereby is death: for where man kills the
the

the flesh, to quicken Life, he loseth both; for all mortification so much urged by Christ and *Paul*, is onlie that care and diligence, according to that Wisdom given to us; that thereby the flesh and daily lust may be kept under, that the heart harden not by fleshlie ease, and fulnesse, and so grow wanton; but not to give Life to the Soul, and so are all wayes of mortification.

It is good to restrain appetite, to keep out the World, to walk temperatlie, and soberlie, and diligentlie in our calling: These are good and honest wayes to be chosen, to keep under the Rebellious flesh: But to do these with an opinion of Life thereby, is most base and double dealing; for while we pretend to be humble, we are inwardlie proud, while we seem to mourn, we laugh in our selves; he that deals with Christ, must deal with a single mind, and shut all out at doors but Christ, and thou and Christ argue the case: What thou can plead for thy self, and thou shalt see all Reason dumb, and nothing in thee, but a poor prisoner praying daily for pardon; and in nothing the freenesse of his grace more appear, then in calling the *Gentiles*. This is it which Christ saith, *They shall come from the east and west, &c. And the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out*: So they are not happie whom man accounts, but whom God accounts so: What he did to those that knew nothing; but groping after goodnesse, even sought it in man, and so thought that the Souls of those excellent men ascended, some into the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and became Gods; persecuted Christ evermore, even to those blind men he sent his speciallest messenger, that even was to open their eyes, and turn them from darknesse to light; So that,

Whom God intends to make happie, he sooner or latter calls and brings his heart by the Word of truth out of the World and himself; and all to rest simply on him and believe, as *Matth. 22. Psal. 45. Hearken, O daughter Sion; thou must leave thy Fathers house, and Abraham, Gen. 12. &c.*

For man is gone out into the World and himself, else should we never have stood in need of this Word, but it should have lived in us for ever; but being gone from God, he sends out his message, saying, Go carrie my will and promise to lost man, and bid him *behold me*. For this is the execution of his purpose, this calling is outward and inward. Outward in the outward dispensation of the Gospel, he layes before man his Will and Promise; and so man understanding and fixing thereon, sees a kind of good in it, and approves of it.

Inward

Inward, when through the inward power of the Truth, he finds out mans heart, and brings it to it self; separating it from the World and its own devices, in sorrow and misery; and to attend on his Promise, though man see nothing but death and misery: So that this calling is not as most think, a mending of this or that Action; but a destruction of all, and calling man from it, not to make him wise to fulfill his own will, but to lose it.

The Word is *Evocare*, viz. Call out, *as out of Egypt, have I called thee.*

Woe then to them that are dayly sought and called, and have not an ear to hear: Like these Guests, Matth. 22. Their minds are shut up, they see not their own wants, nor the beauty of the Brid-groom set before them: God calls man to partake of his love; but man saith, I have another, and so the righteous Wrath of God lights on him. For though some expound that, Matth. 12. *Calling those that were bidden*; That this bidding is the universal grace given to all, and that calling is a further grace added to the free-will: Yet, I take that adding to be the Covenant made with the *Jews*, to whom he offers the light of the Gospel; as, Acts the 18. *This calling abides still in the use of the Gospel*, as: First, To dally Repentance.

2. To believing.

3. To do his Will, in obedience of Love.

4. To suffer in Patience.

To a Rebellious People. Though they pretended Holinesse, and the service of God; yet they were grown Rebellious against his Will and Word; So that,

There is in all men a Rebellious Will and Lust; yea, even in believers, which it ever leads man from God into misery, and bondage, as in *Adam*, and *David*.

And *Paul* complains of it, Rom. 7. Gal. 5. *This fights against the Spirit*, though the will and desire of man be natural qualities, yet when they are set upon vain objects, and come to rule and draw, they ever bring into bondage.

For, hereby is God more denied than by any; for though they know him to be true, they trust him not; and as for a stranger to denie and distrust a man is nothing, but for a Child it is Rebellion, and Rebellion is as the sin of Witch-craft, it denies God, and makes a Covenant with the Devil, and workes through envie ever to destruction.

Thus

Thus, unbelief ever Rebells against God; yea, raiseth up arms against him: When he would be a King, no say they, This man shal not rule over us; but would reign as King themselves.

But believers most of all, who dwell in the Kings House, and professe alledgeance and service, and yet underneath, practise and labour that they may be King, and wear the Crown; and so are still drawn from God by Lust and fleshlie Wisdom: And this may he say to our Land, he hath stretched out his hand long over us, but we still Rebel; witnesse,

1. That common trade of iniquitie, as common as breathing.
2. That hardnesse of heart under the Vail of the Gospel.
3. That heartlesse dealing betwixt Religion and the World.
4. That casting off the Word we professe, and believe not that to be true which we know, &c.

This makes man an enemy to God, and this is it which makes thee cast the Son out of doors; we walk in away that is not good, after our own thoughts.

So the Lord may say; *They have forsaken my Covenant.* They follow their own, which leads into an ill way of Life. So that, When man forsakes the simple Word of God; and cleaves to the devices and inventions of his own thoughts, and follows them; he forsakes the way of Life, and chuseth the way of Death which never prosper.

It was the Curse that lay on the Gentiles, That he suffered everie one to walk in his own way, as Psal. 18. *They would not hear, nor would have none of me, I gave them up to their own Counsells:* Thus Adam and Israel forlook the way of the Covenant and Promise made to Abraham, and made a Calf, and murmured against Moses, &c. The wicked walk in a way that is not good, *There is a way that seems good, but the Issues thereof are the Issues of Death.* For though man was made righteous, yet he seeks manie inventions, to save him; but not by the way of righteousness: He hath sold the Birth-right, and Covenant, he hath forsaken with Esau; and now he would have the blessing by any means: He mourns and weeps for the blessing, and would have it though by killing his brother, and living in an hunting way.

For mans way in himself is not able to guide him to happiness, for lust blinds him, and leads him to something that is sensual; reason is proud, and leads into all things visible, but Faith is the ground of things neither seen nor felt.

But Christs vvay vvvhich vvvas the vvway of Life, vvvas not after his ovvn thoughts, but as the Father commands, so he speaks. He sought not his ovvn glorie, but did the Will of the Father, stablishing his Kingdom, and so his vvay vvvas a nevvn and living vvway, though the Vail of the flesh vvvas rent; And so it is vvwith man, not by a vvway of the flesh; but to break through the flesh, and by crucifying it, enter into the Holiest of all by Faith onlie.

1. This vvvas the vvway prescribed to *Israel*, God brought them out by a strong hand, and vvweak means; as alvvvayes in the vvwhole course, that no power of the flesh might appear, as *David* confesseth, they got not the land by their ovvn povver.

2. Then in the Wildernesse, from one place to another, vvwhere they took no rest, but in the Covenant only.

3. Then through Jordan, the River of Tears.

4. Then overcame theemie.

5. God left them a Lavv of love to vvwalk by.

6. Commands not to joyn with the enemies, but to destroy them

But all these *Israel* forsook, & at the last grevv so presumptuous in regard of their prosperitie; and so wise in Religion, that they vvwould not be beholden to God, but vvwould save and free themselves by vvwayes of their ovvn, till at last they fell from God; and still they thought this vvvas a holy and likely vvway: Thus the old course of the World is fallen upon the *Gentiles*, everie man vvwalks in his ovvn vvway, and yet everie man thinks his vvway is good, and like to prosper; as,

1. The Worl ding, by getting, and gathering and making sure for future time; seems a safe vvway; but Christs vvway vvvas to forsake all the World, and had none of these.

2. The Wanton thinks his vvway right, hecause of his faint vvway of Repentance, and yet he fears, Ecclesiastes, *That it will lead to a fearful end of judgement.*

3. The *Pharisees* and false *Apostles* vvwalk in a seeming vvway of holinesse vvwith Christ; but this makes Christ and all in vain, to joyn any thing vvwith him: For Christ vvvas to denie himself, and cleave to the Promise of Faith, yea, though he vvvas to be taken from them, yet they should vvwait for the Promise of the Father; vvwho should send the Promise of the Father vvwithin fevv dayes.

Nay, vve are grovvvn so cunning in Religion that vve can chuse out Christs own Way, and approve it, but walk not therein by the Spirit of Christ; but so follow Christ in our fleshly

fleshly thoughts, but not by Faith alone, giving up our selves in love to the good of others.

So, we see Gods wayes is not our wayes, yea, and our thoughts and his words never agree together: one of these must be forsaken: either we must cleave to his Word, and forsake our own wayes, or follow our own wayes, and forsake his Word.

But we live by thinking not by believing: Invent, devise and comprehend, that we may guide our selves; but not rest in patience to believe another: Like the Prodigal; but see the good and safe way of Christ, that stands in simple believing from a troubled heart, and in subjection to the Fathers will in love, in patience to bear his Crosse. But this is grievous to fleshly thoughts but sweet and safe to the Soul.

A people that provoked me to anger continually. That are hardened under the Love of Religion, and so presumptuous, that they rebell with a stout and stiff neck; So that,

When man hath gotten the World into his heart, and some competent way of Religion to cover his rottenesse, he falls into hardnesse, securitie and presumption, and so fights against God with open face. Isa. 1. *I have nourished a People, and they rebelled against me,* and in Jeremiah, *They murther and steal, and all under a collar of the Temple of the Lord:* They have gotten a brow of brasie, like those, Psal. 10. Pro. 1. *Tush, there is no knowledge in the most high,* For the knowledge of the truth without the power thereof, hardens above all, But the Truth in the power thereof; beats man down, and all things in man; to live in another, or not to live at all; not that the World and Religion can grow up together, for then it choaks the Word, and wee become *Rebellious as Adam.*

For now they sin with an authoritie, under the foreknowing of a Saviour: Like a man in the Kings house, that robbeth and oppresseth under the hope of Pardon.

For whatsoever makes man strong hearted, is not Christ, for he melts the heart in sorrow and in love: For this is the greatest disgrace that can be; if a man must bring Christ to help forward his Lust, As to steal and oppresse, and Christ must help us. Thus with us.

God hath holden out his hand, but we dare provoke him to his face,

Face, and call his Word a lye, and run to other shifts; as though we seem to flatter a while, yet Religion is but made a way to bring about our own Lusts, as,

1. Do get the World more free; or advance our glorie, or keep peace; but all these covers a Rebellious heart: For if it were seen as thy Face, thou wert a shamed for ever. This is the greatest Rebellion in the Church, covered under Religion, and God most provoked thereby: For here man tempts God, and layes all blame on him, blindly waiting for his Power; yet hath no heart nor desire to return, storing himself with Riches and Righteousnesse, that he may not repent.

But do we provoke him to anger, or rather our selves to our own confusion? for we see how he delt with *Israel*, led them captive, and then cast them off: Doubtlesse he was never more provoked; they sacrifice in Gardens, and burn Incense on Altars of Brick, which should have been on Altars of Stone, without a hammer.

Thus he shews how they chuse their own wayes, that is to say, They sacrifice in Gardens when the Law was at *Jerusalem*; burnt Incense on Brick, which should have been on Altars of Stone without a hammer; as Christ the Stone hewen out of the Rock without hands: they lay among the groves there to enquire of the dead for the want of things, and not waiting on God, and the Words of the Prophets, *They eat abominable broth, and swines Flesh*, both which were forbidden by the Law.

So that in all, they forsake Christ signified by all those, and chuse their own wayes; and this is mans way in the Church: We offer not at *Jerusalem*, sitting at the door of the Tabernacle, weeping and confessing. Where is the Mercie Seat, and Ark of the Covenant; but in Gardens of Pleasure, in serving God at our leasure, and not on the Corner-stone, Christ Jesus, but on the Altar of our good qualities, which we have hewen to our selves? We wait not on God, and his Will and Word, that we may know it; but in the dead groves of our devotions, and run back to these rotten effects of care and diligence.

If the World shew good signs, we believe; if we see signs and Wonders, we trust; we feed on Swines Flesh, flesh and broth thereof: That is, we feed on the flesh and filthy World, which begets nothing, but flegmatick and cold opinions instead of pure nourishment to Faith and Love.

Stand by, for I am holier than thou: So with all these abominations, there went still a poysoned opinion of holinesse and high thoughts, which made all stink in his nostrils. So that when with Religion there goes a high thought in man, and exalting of himself above others, because of his Religion; it poysons all and stinks before God, and will bring man to a fearful fall at the last.

Thus it was with the *Pharisee*, I am not as other men; as this *Publicane*, Col. 2. *Touch not, taste not, handle not*. It was their practice when they had been at the Mercat, they washed; and the false Apostles thought themselves more acceptable to Christ, because they were circumcised: And those Gadders in the Church that went about talking, and thought because of their Religion, they should be respected and relieved, which *Paul* writes against, that they should not be suffered. Thus is Religion turned into mans own glory and not to Christs glory.

This flows from pride and self-love, which had its beginning in man, and ending in man, as all things do. This makes men Judges in Religion, and not Christ a Saviour; and so with all Religion, there grows up a cursed opinion and seeking of respect, which poysons all. But well worth that Religion where man is not lifted up by it, and hath nothing, but all laid up and enjoyed in Christ, not in self.

S E R M O N XIX.

Isai. 63. 1. Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Ezra? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatnesse of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, and mighty to save.

IN the tenth verse of the former Chapter is a large promise of Mans Redemption by Christ, under the Type of *Israels* deliverance out of captivity; as, *Prepare the way of the Lord, cast up the high-way, gather up the stones, lift up the Standard*: The Lord hath proclaimed to the end of the World, to *Sion*; Behold thy salvation cometh, his reward is with him, and his work before him: That is to say, Make readie the hearts of men by repentance, and when salvation is

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at hand, and thou shalt be a holy people prepared of the Lord : Prepare the way, that is, let not *Israel* settle in *Babylon*, but come out; Remember *Jerusalem*, that you have lost the signs of my presence, the Ark of my Covenant, the Mercy-seat, and all the tokens of my Love; and that you are now strangers to me : so bring down their hearts, and make a way for my mercy, that I may do them good; that they long for my salvation, and they shall find it ready at hand. Let them not trust in their strength, nor rely on the favour of *Babylon*, the world, the flesh; for they will still keep them bound : but return to me, and I will deliver them; so that,

No mercy to man nor salvation from God, nor redemption by Christ, nor holiness by the spirit; but where God makes way in mans heart by dayly repentance, and dayly turning mans heart from the world, himself; and all things in true sense of his bondage, and longing of the soul after Christ.

Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Psal. 107. He brought down their hearts with sorrow, and then had mercy on them.

For all *Israels* wanderings, he plagues them, till he made them yield and cry and pray; and then helps them in distresse. It was *Johns* office to make way for Christ : For what should Christ do with an hardened heart, filled with conceit of Wisdom, righteousness and the world or riches : For all afflictions that God layes on man, either in the world, or in himself by the word; is but to bring down the heart, to let him see how the World hath deceived him, sin hath beguiled him, and his conceits brought him into a false surmise; and so lets him see, what a little power he hath in himself: that so forsaking and turning to another, he may find mercy.

For though God give gifts to man, yet they are kept onlie in the hand of Faith; else man turns to them, and forgets God and himself; and so becomes proud and conceited, and becomes a Saviour to himself.

But the salvation of God is never given but to repenting hearts, that are ashamed of themselves, and their own cursed and rebellious hearts, and in sighing and sorrowing, pray and seek for mercie.

But we all would have salvation another way than by repentance, as one by knowing, another by dying, another by gathering strength; but none by denying themselves. Indeed we daily pray

pray, *Lord, forgive us our sins*; but sin is not our burden, we would all have mercy to our hardened hearts. Nay, how far are we from the salvation of God, whose hearts never felt the bitterness of repentance, or are again hardened through knowledge.

We all dream of being saved, but alace! there is no way in thy heart: Thou knows how little thou minds God or Christ at all; how little thy heart is troubled about life or death; but carried away with present losse. Where is the place that can witnesse thy sorrow and heavinesse of heart, thy sighing and folding of thy hands? how little is it in thy thoughts? What hast thou done, and daily doest against God or thy self? How little art thou troubled about thy eternal being? no Repentance being wrought in thee, all Religion is but a matter of discourse and circumstance.

But woe to us; for repenting dayes are gone; and so salvation hid: the time was, when we were sinners, and went mourning and weeping, and all our dayes were repenting dayes.

And then were we ashamed to look into our own cursed hearts & vain wayes, and all night our very dreams were on misery; and then light rose in our darknesse: but now we are wise and righteous, and see not the pride and lust, and worldlinesse of our own hearts, even drowned in pride of our own hearts, and have a conceit of salvation in our selves. Is sin lesse sinful than it was? Stand we not as much need of salvation as before? nay, our hearts are not prepared for mercie, but claime it as a due, and therefore is salvation far from us.

But know, that before salvation or freedom come from Christ to our hearts; these high looks must down, and we carried into *Babylon*. God never casts his mercy upon hardened hearts, but the poor and mourners shall be comforted; So that faith and holinesse is daily preserved by repentance and deep humility, when God opens the high way of our hearts, he gathers out the stones; and all his mercies, though they bring comfort, yet still more humbleness, that he should daily be so good and we so vile and rebellious; still so is mercie and salvation contained.

Who is this that cometh from Edom. That is, from the land of captivity, from *Bozra* the chief Citie of the *Edomites*, representing the great power of Satan, Flesh and the World wherein man is bound, and now comes the Prince & Captain of our Salvation out

of our captivity and death, and is consecrated through suffering, even in death overcoming all things; and his garments red with the blood of the Sacrifice.

Laying it down by way of admiration in the question and answer, containing wondering and Christs answer.

For the whole Chapter is a Prophetical Declaration of Redemption by Christ, and the state of man to be redeemed: as,

1. The Person or Redeemer, even Christ discovered by his power and strength; travelling in the greatnesse of his strength, and the rest; &c.

2. By his truth and righteousness, *I that speak in righteousness.*

3. The way and means how he hath done it, *viz. First, By death under a Metaphor, of Trading the wine-presse.*

4. What he hath done, *viz. Troden them in his wrath.*

Who is this that cometh. This shews the expectation of the captive Church, waiting for a deliverer according to the promise, after seventy weeks; so man after his long bondage under hell and flesh, and seeing Christ a weak poor man, and that all in blood crucified, dead and buried; seems an unlikely man to reason, but in his answer, he puts away all doubts; and that he is the only man and Redeemer: So that,

The weary waiting and forlorn heart of man, though he see little possibility to obtain life by Christ in sense and reason, but many more likely devices; ye shall never find freedom but only in him.

For he was ordained of old to break the Serpents head, and prophesied to bind up the broken hearted: Yet, what a doe had he with his Disciples for to periwade them that He was He? but still they cried, Is not this Josephs Son, is this likely to be He; He only was Jobs refuge in all his afflictions, when he saw nothing but death, yet his Redeemer liveth. This he witnesseth by word and work. By word, *I am come to save the world, I am the Resurrection and the Life.* By works, How many poor, lame and blind did He help, which He was after to do spiritually; the afflicted he comforted as Mary and the Prodigal: The Pharisees cryed out, Who is this that forgiveth sins, that destroyes the Law? Nay, others said, Except ye be circumcised, Christ cannot profit.

1. For he came to destroy the flesh, and redeem the spirit; therefore was he weak in the flesh, & strong in spirit, that he might

he curious witt and pride of man; who looked for great

2. All

2. All things prosper according to his presence with man, and not he according to the power of the creature; all other things are but miserable comforters, only puts off for a time, but it comes again with all violence; like a sore that is ill healed.

Yet, who hath believed this report, Nay, in any straits we look for other helps. The World saith, Come see what riches and certaintie: I will relieve thy wants, be diligent, ply thy mind to me, and I will ease thee; and saith, Man; This is that that comes with full hand and good gain: This is like to preserve so much Inheritance, so much coming in; and is yet never a whit eased, but a slave still. The flesh saith, Come to me; I come not in sadnesse and sorrow, but in mirth and pastime; and pleasure; I will put away sorrow from thy heart, and season all sadnesse with mirth; and yet for all this, in the midst thereof the heart is sorrowfull. Reason saith, Come to me, and I will shew thee a likelie way; do good, worke righteousness, see thy great knowledge, and good qualities; then believe that Christ may profit; but simple believing stands not in this, but in another thing; and when thou feels nothing in thy self, Reason would judge this but a blind way.

Nay, saith Christ, But come hither, look on me, believe my Word: I am poor and needie in flesh, and so must thou be; I will deliver thy Spirit, and free thy mind; these deceive thee, but I speak in righteousness, though I seem base, yet all power is given to me, and I am mighty to save. So that, he that looks for salvation by Christ had need of Faith, more than Witt: When the poor captive Soul sees nothing, but death and bondage, no power to free himself; and sees nothing but poor Christ, all wallowing in blood, shut up in the grave, sits mourning at the Sepulchre; and yet look for salvation in him; had need to pray daily, *Lord, increase our Faith, and help our unbelief.*

And to this end would Christ confirm his Disciples in expectation of the Promise and Life by his Death, and to wait for the Holy Ghost by the Sacraments and pledges of his love and truth which he left them, saying, I know ye doubt & fear, and hereafter ye shal see me forsaken, judged, and crucified, and buried; and then will your hearts tremble: but that I have spoken in Righteousnesse; take this as a pledge of my love and truth, when ye come together, eat and drink this, and believe my Promise, and rejoyce in me, and in my death; for though I must trade the Wine-presse alone, yet I will trade it in my Furie. I

I that speak in righteousness.

The word of Christ is the word of righteousness to believing hearts, and shall be assuredly fulfilled to troubled Spirits.

Mighty to save. So that,

All power of saving man is in Christ; no power in man to procure or preserve his own safetie.

I have troden the wine-press. So that,

Jesus Christ hath under-gone the wrath of the Father for man, that he might redeem man from wrath, and by his suffering hath wrought Redemption for man.

I have troden the wine-press alone. So that,

None partakes with Christ in the work of mans redemption, but he is the beginner and finisher of mans happiness.

Mine own arm brought salvation. So that,

When all power in man fails, and miserie strikes; then is the power of Gods Spirit still at hand.

I will trade down the people in my wrath. I will afflict as I have done my son, and bring down their strength, whereby they now stand without me; they shall taste of my wrath and see how good it is: So that,

All shall sooner or latter taste of the Indignation of the Lord, that God may prepare man for mercie, and bring man out of himself and the world.

Jobs spirit was drunk up with wrath, *Saul* was slain and stricken down to the earth: *Pharaoh* that made light of God, was brought under. What wrath did *David* suffer, even pains of hell; that made him cry out, and so was his joy restored: yea to *Abraham*, he seemed an enemy; yet in his subjection was the Covenant renewed, and Christ above all was sorrowful unto death, and his soul a Sacrifice, and then he arose and ascended.

For God will destroy all his enemies in man, that man may be freed, and those that stick to them shall be destroyed with them; that we may be conformed to our head, and so fitted for mercie in him, who came to sustain man under wrath: For how is he saved from wrath that is never under it? This were to save him in his fleshly way and hardness of heart: That just Law which man daily breaks, Thou shalt dye the death, must be true in all, and kill man, that the second Covenant may live in man, and he thereby.

God doth this to bring down mans heart and make him yeeld, for man can shuffle off manie things, but this bitter hour past all help. But we all strive to go to Heaven with hardened hearts in beds of doune and worldly fullnesse and ease; we make an agreement, and think we are harmlesse and innocent; and another, that he is a friend of God and his Word and Gospel; and another, that he is diligent, careful and righteous; and therefore thinks that he shall escape, and so would live and die without Repentance, Wrath and Miserie; and yet Christ could not do that, and so none would drink of Christs Cup.

But know, thought we can jeast and talk it out, and clothe ourselves with conceits, and opinions; yet God will trample all these under foot: When his Wrath shal be revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousnesse of men, that hold the truth in unrighteousnesse; either by his Word and Spirit in mans heart, that he shal say; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the bodie of this death.*

When he shall knock at the door, or call for mountains to fall upon him; then shal he see what good he hath gotten with sticking so hard to the World, and to himself, but all too late.

But yet to a believing and yeelding heart, that judgeth himself and not God, in midst of Wrath, he remembers mercie; and even in this, he aims at mans good, though he see it not: For it is to whip and to beat mans proud heart, and fleshlie confidence, and to cast out that proud and worldlie Devil, and destroy the enemies that are in mans heart.

Thus the wanton heart of man fights for ease in the Land of captivitie, and would see no evil, but flee from wrath, through hardnesse of heart that cannot repent; and so heaps up Wrath against the day of Wrath.

We would do evil, but would not feel it, nor hear of it; we would rebell against God, and follow our own Lusts, that we may live, and yet would have him to put up all: Nay, but the wise Father knows that this is the way to undo the wanton child, and therefore casts him off, leaves him to himself, that he may return by Repentance, saying, Thou knowest, that I have been a Father to thee, I have provided for thee, when thou wast young, I maintained thee; When thou wast of age, thou would not be ruled: I was forced to cast thee off. This

now justlie come upon thee, yet seeing thou judgest thy self, and justifies me, I will take away my Wrath, and receive thee to mercie, that thou mayest praise me. But, first, he makes them drink of his furie; but our cursed hearts cry for ease and rest, but God will keep on the Rod till the heart be broken, and brought down, and make us like a drunken man, that is besotted with wine, that mindes neither Wife nor Children, estate nor credit: So with us, when his Wrath lyes on us, we can neither minde Wife, World, nor Children. For this sticks close, and nothing can ease; Riches are vain; Pleasures are gone, laughing is turned into mourning, and nothing can ease the heart but mercie; but how will these escape, when time of mercie is gone.

I will bring down their strength; So that,
Gods saving way to man, is to bring down the strength of man in-himself, that he may be exalted in another.

I will mention the loving kindnesse of the Lord.

There is an endlesse Fountain of Truth and Righteousnesse in God, and incomprehensible mercie, which is never wanting to praying and miserable hearts.

But mans forsaking and turning from that, is the cause of all miserie unto man, as Psal. 81. Deut. 23. *For he said, Surely ye are my people,* &c. Here, he mentions his dealing with them in particular, that is to say, He ever had an eye over them for good, at least to testifie his mercie, and,

1. He remembers their Adoption, with the truth and simplicitie of their hearts; and though now fallen, yet they were his people, and would not lose their preservation.

2. He was their Saviour, and delivered them out of afflictions, wherein he was also afflicted.

3. There guide and governour, He led them all the dayes of old by the Angel of his presence, and then shews their Rebellion, and his mercie again in pardoning.

They are my people. This he spake in regard of his first chusing of them, and uprightnesse of their hearts then, and safetie they were in through his Power; So that,

True hearted simple minded men, were and ever shall be blessed of God, what ever gifts they have, when double and shuffling hearts shall be accursed.

See *Dauids* plain and simple heart, when *Nathan* had opened his eyes, he did not shut them again; but though a King, and a fact discovered that might shame him, yet he goes not about to excuse it, but confesseth plainlie, and doth pennance to all posteritie; yea, God is near to all that call upon him in truth, and the good ground are good honest and simple hearts; but the *Pharisees* that say they have no sin, do lye, and deal not truelie: and a man is a lyer to the Holie Ghost, to think to joyn with the Disciples in love, and yet keep the World in his heart to trust to; and in Christ was found no guile; and God loves truth in the inward parts.

For this is the opening and uncovering of the heart to be capable of mercie, and so hence comes confessing and believing with all the heart: For covering is a greater hardnesse added to our former sin: It was sin in *Adam* to forsake God, but it was greater to cover it; and in *Saul* to spare *Agag*, but greater to excuse it, and lie to the Holy Ghost.

This is a fighting against Christ, and strengthening our selves in something else, that we might not stand in need of him: Like the malefactor, that hath done evil, and yet will excuse it, and justifie himself, he will be hanged indeed.

For God is a God of truth, and workes truth in the inward parts, and the power of truth is to discover the subtiltie of man and the Devil, and to convince the World, and to lay the heart naked and bare before God.

Away then with all doubling lyes, let God be true, and the Devil and everie man a lyer: From the beginning we all professe to love God, and believe in him, but we lie. But, Whence, then is this care and confidence in the World, this fear, and sorrow for losse; this pleading of our own Righteousnesse, to keep up conceit? We professe to love God above all, but we lye: Whence then is this self-love, and of the World? and we forsake him for a Mor-sel of Bread; that we love our Brethren.

Whence then is this malice and revenge, this oppressing and grinding, this cufinning, and circumventing, and that we love the truth, and yet believe it not at all, but sell it for our own wills, and that God would change his will, and rather than we want, our Lusts.

We are all knowing and devote men, but honest simplicitie is
lost

lost among men, plain dealing is gone: So in Religion, truth and simplicitie is gone; simple praying and believing from a troubled Spirit, is gone, simple love one to another, is gone; and everie one judging another; and locked up in secret surmising; not bearing vvith infirmities, but blazing abroad the frailties of others.

But God will find out all our falshood one day, when all our excuses shal be as shiftlesse as to *Adam*: When he shall open the Books, and that are hid, layed open: Then shal thy Hypocrisie and double dealing be laid open, whither thou hast trusted God, or thy self; loved Him, or the World; Then shal it be seen, whether thou believed indeed and in truth: For true evidence shal come against thee a malefactor which thou canst not denie.

It is not our simple finning that hinders our happinesse, for God will pardon; but it is our lying and covering it that hides us from Christ: As the Child that hath not onlie made a fault, but hides and covers it, is beaten double. This his Father cannot abide.

God gives us true and simple hearts, we seek great gifts and qualities, and become wise; but lose innocencie, and run from our selves.

In all their afflictions he was afflicted. And the Angel of his presence *saved them*. Here is Christ suffering, who bare the infirmities of man in all weaknesse; So that,

Christ the loving Saviour of man, partakes with man in all his miserie; and lovingly helps when all fails, Heb. 2. *Forasmuch as the Children were partakers of flesh and blood, &c.* Heb. 5. *He is a faithful high Priest, subject to like infirmities;* And was partaker with all that was miserable; but the Wealth and Glorie of the World he had none of: Like a loving elder-brother that sees his younger overburthened, helps him; beaten, weeps; and hungry gives him meat.

For he was the Word of the Father, and was God, yet he took upon him the form of a servant, and became flesh, and dwelt among us, that we might see him afflicted, suffering, forsaken; and yet he overcame all.

For he came to help the afflicted, therefore he came in the flesh

flesh ; that He might destroy flesh ; and by enabling man to suffer , destroying fleshly lust in man.

Thus was He given as a witnesse to the people , and the first-begotten of many : What then means these high thoughts , and soaring conceits that seek Christ in heaven , and think Him to be some angry spirit ; and so rack their thoughts and beat their brains in comprehending Him, but lo, He is with the poor, afflicted and forsaken ; this high and full Religion He cares not for, nor hath any communion therewith.

What a hearting then is this to patience , that like a loving husband , is with the wife in well and woe ; thou thinks thy case singular , none like thee ; thou poor , He poorer ; thou wants the fathers love , so did He ; thou art persecuted , so He ; unto death ; thou sick , so He swate blood for sicknesse . : But we have little fellowship with Him, for we are full and rich , and at ease ; He bears our weaknesse , but who feels it ; He wipes away tears, but who sheds them ; He hears our cryes, but who makes them : Nay, we are all Christs to our selves ; therefore He is a stranger to us.

All high flying Religion then is not of Christ , for He hath no communion with man , but in affliction , therefore *Paul* desired only to be partaker in His afflictions , for He hath not to do with rich men at ease, and he that saith, He hath fellowship with Him and not in His death, lyes and deals not truly.

It is not affliction that hurts or hinders man , but want of Faith ; for he is afflicted with us, but because we do not believe His power and truth, nor are we patient to want rest, therefore are we crushed under afflictions : we have not learned to lose the world and our selves with Him ; the fire cannot fear them.

And where man is partaker with Christ in afflictions , He makes him also partaker with others, to mourn with them that mourn.

But we are little disposed to the practice of Faith , while we judge others in stead of pardoning , we spread abroad their Infirmities, we spoil the poor ; but believing miserable men have a friend at back that is with them, giving a mouth and wisdom, when friends and world fail ; yet then He abides and fails not, but when they have least hope , they have readiest help
and

and when they are weak , then are they the strongest.

And the Angel of His presence. When they were brought low in affliction , and sate in sorrow , and helplesse repenting hearts, then his love breaks out ; So that ,

Christ is only present to afflicted spirits, and His love and compassion only , is the stay of repenting hearts , and nothing else.

As here he alludes in the presence of the God of *Israel* , in their Redemption out of *Egypt* , when they knew not what to do; the Angel brought them out, went before them, and though they fell into many straits, yet the Lord pitied and helped them; yea though they rebelled daylie , yet He afflicted and pardoned them : And His love and mercy is never seen so much, as in daylie pardoning ; for it is a burden that all the World cannot remove.

For He was given to bear the infirmities of men, Mat. 11. If any be burthened he shal find rest to his soul : As in the *Prodigal* and the *Publican* , like a wise tender father , whose child hath wantonly run away , yet the father seeks him and finds him; First , lets him sit forlorn in the wilderness, and seems to take no notice ; then when he sits crying out of himself , O wretch that I am, that hath thus abused my good father , cast away my self and know not what to do, but dy and perish. Then he appears , and frowns on him a while, but after , his heart be brust with sorrow , the father can no longer refrain , but smiles and comforts him, as *Joseph* to his brethren.

For He came to seek and save that which was lost, He came to redeem the captive spirit of man , that was locked up in fleshly bands and his own guilt : Not to ease the captive flesh of man, for many great afflictions ly on many , whom He never easeth, because man cannot have his own Will and Lust and World and Ease and Glory ; but these he pities not.

But when the spirit mourns after God, and cannot be comforted by all the world, but sits in ashes , and cryes in the night ; the Sun then breaks out , and joy comes in the morning. But nothing is a burthen to the spirit of man, but sin and guilt, and weaknesse ; for other afflictions are burthens to the flesh , and they are helped : But in the afflicted spirit, there is such a depth of miserie , that nothing can help but His Love and Spirit that He hath promised : As nothing can ease the heart of a rebellions

ous child, but reconciliation with the Father, all that man can do to help, can but strengthen Reason, His Love only stays the heart by Faith ; all things do but only put off, and that by strengthening conceit ; but it returns again with greater violence , like a wound ill healed.

But this shews that we have little of Christs company , save only His name among us ; we talk of Him, and dispute and follow Him up and down to the Temple , and seem to sit by His side, but with proud hardened hearts. Nay, I judge whether thou art as well with Him as without Him , for any good thou hast by Him , save only a heartless and helpless hope ; if thou may have the World, thou seeks no more : If thou have no more joy, than thou hast with Him , it will prove but small.

Nay , we are not for His presence , like an adulterous Wife that cares not for her Husbands presence ; but if ever that heart be turned by Repentance , and possesse of its own guilt ; then none but He. Others thinks to procure His presence by trimming and garnishing a fair out-side profession of Christ, and think , if they were more holy and righteous , then He would surely come ; but we thus make a Christ to our selves.

But woe to that Righteousnesse that hides Repentance , and hardens the heart ; Woe be to that Presumption that is lifted up above Mercie : Woe be to that Conceit of believing that joyns hands with the World, and shuts man up in self-love ; and woe to that Hardnesse of heart , that despiseth long suffering, and heaps up Wrath against the day of Wrath.

And hence we see , that where Repentance is hid from man, Gods love and pity are far from him ; whatever we have, it matters not , how Wise , Righteous , and Holy , Rich or Youthful we are, if any Hardnesse of heart goes with all : But we are full and fit as Queens and want nothing. Yet the day is coming, when we shal seek Him and shal not find Him ; when all shall fail us, and we afraid to hear of His presence ; when He shall sit as Judge, to judge the World, then shall we cry,

O where is He now that we despised and set so light by ? And then weep with Esau , and say , *Father , hast thou not one blessing left ? Bless me , even me also :* Then shall He answer , *nay , These are blessed, and shall be blessed, thou hast had the fulnesse of the earth for thy portion ; but my love and mercy thou regarded not.*

In his pity and love be redeemed and bare them. Here is the continuance

nuance of His love, notwithstanding their dayly falling off; yet He guided and bare them as a nurse in His arms all the ancient dayes, as He choose them in love and pity, and remains faithful to *Abraham* and his seed; So that,

As Gods love and pity without any thing in man, is the first fountain of life to man and only cause of his happiness; so is the same Love, Goodnesse and Power, the dayly preservation and guide of man in the way of happiness throug Faith.

As *Paul*, by the grace of God, *I am that I am; not I, but the grace of God in me*; therefore doth the Lord so often remember *Israel* of his deliverance out of *Egypt*, the promise to *Abraham* that they might look at that Law, and depend on that Promise.

How came *Israel* out of all these straits, but that God still pity-ed and forgave them; as *David*, how he prayed to be guided and preserved and relieved dayly from God: And this the Apostle strove for, that nothing might stand in the heart of man after grace received, but the same grace still; and further beats down all things else but this.

For is not man as weak in himself, and Satan and the Flesh as strong as ever? Is not man as sinful, and His grace and help as needful as ever?

For *Paul* of himself could not live, but Christ lived in him, and he waited therein, *He hath delivered, and will deliver me.*

Christ did not worke properly for himself, for man to guide himself by his own power; for this is not in man but in Christ, who is his Safetie, Peace, Righteousnesse and Holinesse, and all; for *Israel* was not able to stand before any enemy when they forsook the Covenant, for what shall uphold man under the cross, but His love and pity when all fails.

As the Martyrs, was it their wit, or power, or strength of heart that preserved them? No, but the Power and Truth of Christ through Faith: For as the child hath nothing of his own, but lives at the fathers appointment and providence; so we.

See then, it is not as wise unbelieving men imagine, that after the myserie of the Gospel be revealed, and apprehended in flesh, turns back with *Israel* and become wise and righteous and strong in themselves; so it is with many that were finners; but God received them to mercy, and now they worke it out, beginning in the spirit, but ending in the flesh, and then think to recompence God.

Is God more beholden to thee than before, or rather is not thy sinful lust, and pride, and worldly heart, and hypocrisie as hateful to God now; when thou hast the knowledge of his will as thou thinkest.

But these are commonly the greatest backsliders; For though they stick unto Religion, yet they fall from Christ in Religion and conceit, and clothe themselves with his gifts: The World is in their hearts, Repentance gone, Prayer dead, Faith only in name.

So that, to those he that have just complaint, one is rich in the World, and cares not for his blessing, but he will turn it to a curse: another, is wise to guide himself, but will prove a fool and wander: another, is Righteous and rich in Knowledge, but a thief to God, and his mercie most shut from him: Whence, God shal judge & say, Thou of all others shouldest have trusted me, thou profest my Name, sat by my side; but thou art the great thief of all, for thou hast robbed me of my glorie, thou ran from me in pride; therefore, thou of all others art the farthest off mercie.

See the wonderful love of God towards man, that pities man, that pities not himself: When the sturdie Child hath run away, yet having wrought his peace, he calls him back by his Word and pardons him; when the weak heart of man feels Danger and Wrath, and feels no ease to comfort him; when he is persecuted, and knows not what to answer, God puts a Word in his mouth.

What a fool then is man, that hath such a pitiful Father attending for his good in all, and yet runs to the World and flesh, those cruel Tyrants, and seeks help there.

So dayly mercie in God, and miserie in man, and Faith in Gods Word, is mans preservation.

Pray we then, that the Truth of the Gospel, and Faith may be preached in the Church, that man may have nothing to lean to but mercie; but how hard is this new vway to continue, but we would stil have something to feel and lean to, but not his mercie.

But they rebelled and vexed his Holie Spirit. Such is the cursed nature and rebellious flesh of man; So that,

Such is the rebellion of the fleshly nature of man, that the more goodnesse and love God shews to man, he is the more rebellious and wanton against God, and forgetful of himself to the losing of all.

Israel, Jer. 2. David casts off God, when his mountain was strong and

and Jude ; They turn the grace of God unto wantonnesse ; And Inourished a people , and they have forsaken me ; they abused the Patience of God.

This is plain in experience , though God hath given us all enough in the World , that we see , or may see His blessing ; who might have frustrated thy labour ? yet how lothe to depend on this blessing , but would have all sure in the flesh by extremitie. He hath verified , and yet we have not trusted His Word , but would have all in possession.

For the flesh grows wanton by ease and fulnesse , and it is the hardest thing of all to enjoy fulnesse , and yet the flesh not to be hardened thereby.

To keep Humilitie , Repentance , and Weaknesse a foot , when we feel rest and peace ; but then man thinks it will never be night again : Like a wanton child , when he hath gotten what he would have , casts off the father , as the *Prodigal* , till he had spent all : How may we see it in children , when parents have cockered them , so that now they are the greatest vexation , and they wish they were dead or had never been born.

For man dots on every thing , that he quite forgets the fountain , and makes it a foundation of future hopes.

Hence cometh so much looking at what we have seen and felt , and reckoning up old store , and thence arguing our present happinesse.

We are grown hardened and secure , and it may be , shal never taste the like again.

But what a cursed thing is the heart of man , that God can do him no good , but he turns it to evil ? as in all ; thou never prays nor seeks heartily to God , but when need pincheth thee ; then thou cryes : but if He ease thee , thou casts Him off : As *Israel* , both in the wilderness and *Canaan* , to *Dan* and *Beth-el* , and made agreement with the *Canaanites* , and after led captive , to killing of the Prophets ; and afterward to persecute Christ himself , till they had lost all , and all under a colour of Religion.

And so in the Worlding , God hath given all it into his hand , and he hath let into his heart , and made a god of it , and that World and worldly mind as God , he trusts it and loves it above Him , saying , This is it that must ease my heart , so he grinds the poor , and oppresseth the needy.

Others having tasted the goodnesse of God in Christ , have cast off

off fear, and thinks all is their own; under pretence of Religion they are grown wanton and worldly out-right.

Others, he hath pardoned a thousand times, and they are grown wanton, hardened and presumptuous to cast themselves down; thinking, but not believing that he will pardon, what ever they have done.

Others, have health and strength, and do nothing but serve their own Lusts: So that there is great danger in prosperitie; there Satan traps man, then man grows secure, forgetful, and wanton: Watch, for there is danger of the Devil, shutting the heart in that fullnesse, and so stops the currant of his grace.

No thriving in Religion but under the Crosse, for man is never ought but then: What a rebellious creature is man, and untoward child; that because God is good, therefore he will be nought: The Father cannot smile, but the child grows way-ward, but when God seems evil, man is the best; but do we provoke him to anger, or our selves to our own destruction; for he will say, I did thee good, and sent thee Wealth and Health, and Riches, and would never have failed thee. I sent my Spirit which thou grieved, therefore, thou must want the comfort thereof at need.

S E R M O N X X.

Genesis 22. 1. *After these things God tempted Abraham, and said, Abraham, Abraham, and he said, here am I.*

WE have heard of Christs birth according to the Promise, and the wonderful treasure of all good, that was to be conveyed to the Church by him; the Church conceived joy, because they expected a *Messiah* was to come, and great hope offered by him; but no tooner was he come, but he was hunted with miseries, and never had rest in the flesh, till death was conspired & accomplished, that so mans faith might not be in the arm of flesh, but in the power and mercie of God. This we may plainly see in this storie figured, than which not a more lively type in the Scriptures; for *Isaac* being born, according to the Promise it could not be but *Abraham* rejoyced, and might have great hope even in Reason, that the Promise might go on; but that God might purge this, he takes *Isaac* away in the flesh, that the puritie of *Abrahams* Faith might appear to all the World.

In this Chapter is laid down the Storie of *Abraham* and *Isaac*'s Son.

1. The offering of *Isaac* at Gods Commandment.
2. The Confirmation of the Promise, and renewing of the Covenant.
3. The posteritie of *Nabor*, and familie of *Rebecca*; in offering of *Isaac*, note;
 1. The Purpose and Commandment of God, as a tryal to *Abraham*.
 2. The expectation of the Commandment, and *Abrahams* obedience in the Command.
 1. The Time after these things.
 2. The Author, God said to *Abraham*.
 3. The scope, that is to try *Abraham*. In *Abraham* we note,
 1. The expectation of the Commandment.
 2. His obedience against nature in both overcoming; as,
 1. His great power of Faith against Reason.
 2. Flesh which assaulted in diverse circumstances.

After these things, that is, after the many tryals that *Abraham* had, now comes the greatest of all; for he had been sore tossed by nine trials, as the *Hebrews* note, and this is the tenth.

1. Forsaking his Countrey and all.
2. Fleeing into *Egypt* for Famine.
3. Losse of his Wife and danger of his Life.
4. War with four Kings for redeeming *Lot*.
5. Despairing of Issue, he married his maid.
6. Is glad to put her away and Child too, to please *Sarah*.
7. Is circumcised being old.
8. Looseth his Wife to *Abimelech*.
9. Cast out *Ishmael* and his Mother.

Thus *Abraham*, after he believed the promise, and was assured of Gods protection, was still exercised under the crosse, that he might thereby have daily experience of Gods truth and love, and that no fleshly reason might arise in him: and now behold, a greater than all these; for these are but as the prick of a prin in regard of this, but now God comes even with a dart to strike him to the heart; So that *Abraham* had now more need of Faith than ever: yea,

After all these things. So that,

After man be brought to Faith, and believing the Promise; yet such

such are the sufferings to be endured hereafter; yet no constant safety and peace, but by the daily exercise and life of Faith, whereby he is to be preserved in all future dangers and temptations that in the flesh will light upon him.

The just shall live by Faith: What wonderful assaults had *David*, what fightings had *Paul*? Satan seeks to devour who persist in Faith.

1. For the rest of the sufferings of Christ are to be accomplished in the flesh.

2. Many are baptized into the truth, that have not drunk of Christs Cup, nor baptized into his death; but slipping the hand of Faith, lean to the flesh, and overturned.

3. For there is a fleshly heart to be purged, and a World to be overcome, whereunto the power of God and Faith of man are as requisite as all these; *Isaac* must be slain.

And can the fleshly will of man overcome these.

4. Thus God daily weakens the out-ward man, and renews the inward, that he may draw man to simplicitie of Faith and Love, and to have his abiding in God; therefore will give him no rest else-where.

1. Thus is man deceived, when having had some light and love of God to shine in his dark Soul, thinks all is done, and Heaven obtained, and so grows presumptuous instead of believing.

2. Either proud, because he imagines to have power over himself in all, which is only in God, or securely presumes on Gods power without either fear of Weaknesse, or Life of Truth upholding him, and so is dayly led into temptation.

1. Thou shalt sometimes see the World smiling, and offering a fair bait and portion, and thy flesh gaping after it, and thousands ensnared thereby.

2. Sometimes good conceits, and by thoughts from that thou knowest, or from thy well qualified mind, which thou thinks adds much to thy Faith, but after these *Isaac* must die.

3. Or sometimes want, fear, and trouble, looks grim at thee, and threatens the downfall of all, and if Faith do not uphold thee, how wilt thou stand; nay, thou shalt see secret lusts and desires, and delights in thy heart, ease, and peace, &c. Which must all down, so that if God keep not Faith alive in man, wearie and uncertain is his way.

But let all look for it, after many temptations still greater behind; one deep calls another, for man by the abuse of the liberty of Faith grows secure and proud, and that must down by the crosse; we think when it is fair, it will never be foul, and when we are rich, we shall never be poor.

Nay, but know that a quarter crosse must come to pull that down; for that great enemy, that is, Death, is not yet vanquished, skin for skin, and all for life; so that the safe path of man is, to settle in nothing, but dwell with God, for *Abraham* might think now all is safe, seing *Isaac* is born, and well grown; but no safetie in that, for after a calm comes a storm, as we see it in the course of all things; so in mans heart day and then night, light and then darknesse.

God doth not take delight in afflicting His people, but rather than they shall return to the world, and delight and be deceived by the flesh, that His truth should seem a lie, He will beat and strike the flesh to the death, with one crosse after another, till it be subdued.

4. Thus we know, God hath com'd near us with many afflictions, and like *Israel*, when it is past, to fall to our courses again; but he will come nearer at last, till he bind us to himself that we dare not desire to start from him.

5. And we see what brings temptations and crosses, that is to say, when flesh makes use of Gods truth to its own advantage, that man begins to think of ease and peace in the flesh, then must the crosse come or else thou wilt be lost.

6. But where will be our refuge when *Isaac* must be slain, for this will come; we have now fulnesse, health and peace, and prosperity and mercies of God on every side, but the day of temptation must come, when we must part with our dearest sons and careful father, thy kind mother and loving sister, thy beloved world and life it self: What then shall stay thee, or whether wilt thou flee? For be sure this day is coming on all flesh. O happy he that hath the Truth of God to sustain him, and an obedient heart, a subject will, and a patient soul that day; for to him only shall *Isaac* be raised from death, and be life in death.

God did tempt and prove *Abraham*. This a temptation of tryal, for otherwise God tempts no man, *Jam. 1.* Not that God was ignorant what was in him, but that God might manifest to the world the power and simplicity of *Abraham's* Faith, and to shew
hat

what is the daylie deliverance in all straits , that all believers may be blessed with faithful *Abel* and *Abraham* ; So that,

God sent this temptation to the purifying of his faith , and weakening of the flesh , that nothing might be left to *Abraham* but God and His power and Truth to rest on , but God alone ; thus to *Israel* , 1 *Sam.* 4. Deliver them into the hand of their enemies , that their trust in the Ark might fail : Thus to *David* , when he had numbred the People , and *Psal.* 107. When his mountain was made strong.

For hereby he purifieth Faith like gold , 1 *Pet* 1. *Peter* must be winnowed as wheat ; for then all rejoicing is taken away in the flesh , when World and all fails.

1. For he seeth that man is apt to joyn with flesh against God , therefore he keepeth this down by daylie suffering ; for man is lothe to lay hands on himself , therefore doth he fight against it in man , both by Word , which if it prevaile not , He adds blows to weaken the flesh , that so man may see what a weak staff he hath trusted to ; and often he crosseth his children therein when they have forsaken God ; He takes away the World , because thou hast run to and trusted it ; He suffers thee to fall because thou trusts to thy Righteousnesse ; He hides his face because the flesh grows wanton by His comforts : Thus God daylie crosseth us , and we take no notice , and lay the blame on this or that , and flee to the World for help ; but then He will come and whipe thee yet more.

2. If the crosse ly long on thee , the cause is , because there is yet some looking for help from flesh , or some lust that will not yield ; thy stubborn heart is yet hardened by fleshly hope : For when God hath accomplisht his ends , then shall freedom come.

3. God seeth , that if we should prosper still , we should be undone ; for fulnesse of flesh , and simple believing , feldom go together ; nay , He will still keep to such a dyet , as thou shalt still have : So will He keep thee under some crosse or temptation , that thou shalt still need His help , and by this Faith , see His power and truth.

4. That is Faith then and Religion that holds out in tryal , for affliction detracts nothing from a man , but shews what a man is ; if thy heart be not upheld by *Isaac* , that is to say , the World , but by His Truth ; what matters it , though *Isaac* be slain , there-

fore, *watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*, that when temptation comes ye may stand and watch, that is, wait in Faith; pray and seek help in him that is mightie to save, so shall we be preserved; no hurt to man by the crosse but much good; for,

1. Thereby Faith is purified.
2. The flesh weakened.
3. And love increased, for then is man pitiful to others.
4. The word prospers, but never thrives but when the crosse goes with it: For full hearts are unfit to receive it, and man at ease easily shuffles it.

Take thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest. This God saw in him, and would bring it under, to separate his heart from his dearest object to him only, *Isaac* was the only son of nature and of promise; So that,

So there is in man, some only son by nature, of some dear object, which he loves, and wherewith he is intangled, which must be slain before man come to live in constant peace and fellowship with God.

David and Absalom had great possessions, there is in the world a lust of the eye and flesh, &c.

1. For man fixeth on something in want of God.
2. While this lives, the soul lives in and by it.
3. This must dy or man must perish.
4. And so far as mans heart fixeth on this, it separat from God.

1. So that the promise of Faith, and living thereby, doth separat man from the dearest object of nature, and makes man obedient to the will of God, even to the losing of all; as, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: He that will lose his life, shall save it: And Paul saith, My life is not dear, so that I may finish my course; for Christ loved not his life unto death: Paul could die at Jerusalem. Acts 21.* For there through the world is crucified, and nature brought into subjection.

2. For not to love *Isaac* is unnatural, and yet to dote on him, or to be tyed to him, or place felicitie in him, is bondage, and argues a self-will and love not mortified, as in *David* to *Absalom*; hereby,

3. God doth wonderfully free his people when by faith He knits

knits man to himself; He layes nature under foot, that man may so enjoy all things in God, that his eyes may be still towards him, that he useth and enjoyeth, as not using.

4. This is to enjoy all things as lawful, that is, a lawful use of all things, and yet not to be brought under the power of any thing.

1. Away then with all halt and heartlesse obedience, when man out of fleshly knowledge seems to flatter God with a few sacrifices, which are nothing but the overplus and superfluitie of thy peacefulnesse and fleshly will; but when he comes to be tryed to the bottom, starts back, as that obstinate disobedience in all; when mans lust hath ceased on an object and will not parte; but is a law, that therein he fights against God in the way of Faith and Love, and man in the common way of Equitie, that so have it, he will; though to his own and everie one a beloved *Isaac*, that is, the treasure of his heart; which though he will communicat other things, yet this he keeps in his closet.

Yea, man hath not only a natural love to the creatures, but further, thinks while it is but so, all is well; as to love wife and children, riches, &c.

But know this, when it exceeds reason, the Philosophers call it, *Dotting affection*; it brings man into bondage, but more when it separats from God: For there is a love natural which is soon satisfied, and there is a violent affection that ever breeds bondage; which placeth a happiness in that thing loved.

2. Thus we see, everie man hath his *Isaac* that must be slain; for as *Isaac* was the natural son, yet must be sacrificed: So man hath not only the fruit of his own natural wit, but even the joyes, peace and freedom that comes by the promise, that must be slain, or at least be offered to God, that man may not depend on these, but on the promise; that so he live not by high Revelations, but by the grace of God which is sufficient, as in *Paul*.

3. All obedience that issues not out of the ashes of Faith, or from the power of Gods love rested on by Faith, is nothing; for not to obtain or coyn a Faith thereby, but as a true expression of a believing heart: And this shews Gods goodness to man, crossing him of his chiefest object, that so he may not cleave to it, but rest in God and His Truth alone.

And get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there. Here is the great tryal of *Abraham*, that he must offer *Isaac* in whom the promise rested: So that he takes away from his people all stayes in the flesh, yea, not only his beloved Son in nature, but also the Son of the Promise; and everie part in whom the Promise should be accomplished: So that now *Abraham* hath nothing left but bare promise, and all those means whereby the promise should be accomplished taken away; So that,

God will sooner, or latter take away from his people all stayes in the flesh, though never so likelie in flesh or reason, that the believing heart may be bared and weakned, and rest purelie and simplie on God and his Truth.

Thus he took from his Disciples, even Christ in the flesh, also from *Gideon*, his great hoste; from the *Jews* their Temple and Ark, wherein they trust; yea, *Jerusalem* it self, that *Jerusalem* might come from Heaven, which is the Mother of us all, from *David* his high mountain.

1. Thus God keeps his Children weak and poor in the flesh, that they may seek to him, and be strengthened by his power and Spirit.

2. Thus he makes way for believing, for while man hath any thing to look at, his eyes are turned from God; nor doth he purelie believe in him.

3. O! This promise is onlie open to the weak and poor, as *Matth. 5.* For none tastes of Wrath that fears it, nor none fails through weaknesse that feels it: The sturdie Oaks are shaken with the storm, when the bending Reed escape through yeilding.

4. Though God have given *Isaac*, yet *Abraham* must not trust to him; so God gives Joy, and Peace, according to the Promise yet may we not leave the Promise, and trust to these, nor tye the Promise to them.

1. Vain then is the stay of them, that have no other foundation, but what flesh yeilds, which is nothing but shame; as also, those that tye God, and lieth him to these, and believe onlie because of these; as the Worldling, because of Riches, the Pharisee, because of Righteousnesse; and Believers, which turn from the Promise, and fix on these onlie, are deceived: For God gives these at his pleasure, but his Truth must rest as mans Foundation.

2. But

2. But how will man do, when *Isaac* must be slain, and all thy hopes in the flesh taken away; As thy Riches, Libertie, Joy, Peace, &c. Where wil thy rest be then, as it was with the Martyrs.

3. Thus we see, how God in crossing man, blesteth him, by causing the outward man to perish, so the inner-man is renewed.

4. Happie he, that enjoyes all things in the flesh, but fix on nothing, but enjoy, as not enjoying; rejoyceth, as not rejoycing; useth, as not using: But if man fix on any thing after the flesh, it is the readie way to lose it; as to the *Jewes* Temple, and *Dauids* high Mountain.

Abraham went three dayes journey. And all this while he shewed not the place, that Reason and Affliction might worke their utmost spite in tryal of Faith; So that,

So doth God with man, he often defers deliverance to man, and hides from him a long time the purpose of his Love, that man may wait in Faith, and be weakned in flesh, and in waiting be delivered.

Thus he made *Israel* to wait four hundred years, the Church waited long for the Promise of the *Messiah*: God hath put times and seasons in his own power, and the *Jews* for a *Messiah* to come with worldly power; but God sent his Son in povertie, and weaknesse; This made *Mordecai* so confident, that if *Esther* refuseth, God would send deliverance some other way, *For the vision is for an appointed time*, Heb. 2.

1. This he doth to hide Pride from mans heart, and to make the World a fool, that when man most expects it, he defers it.

2. God hath a revealed will, which man is to believe; but a secret will, man is to wait on.

3. God, first workes all things down in man, and seperats the heart from them before he comes.

4. For God hath an end, and man hath need of sore afflictions, and when these are brought about, then will God come. Thus the husband man waits for the harvest; First, it is buried in the earth a long time, then appears a litle, but subject to manie frosts, blasts, and disasters, yet he waits thus,

1. Man draws on his miserie by anticipating God his thoughts, We think now, and now with *David*, *O! when shall I come and appear before thee, and mine eyes fail with waiting*, and yet he withholdeth; For thou art not yet subject, when thou sees the Wisdom and Righteousnesse of God, that thou can as willingly lye

lye under , as wisht to be delivered , then shal thou be freed; but so long as there remains a Will of thy own crossing his , this must first be brought under : For God sends light in darknesse, life in death ; therefore, becaule we are not yet dead, nor in darknesse, the Promise is deferred ; it is not enough that thou hast a foundation of Truth , but thou wilt needs have a sign and assurance in flesh for the Spirit to rest on.

2. God hath given his Word and Promise that man is to wait on , but vve are lothe to travel three dayes , and stay till God shevv it : God hath said, I vwill deliver thee, but vve vwould see some sign of it, ; he sayes , I vwill deliver thee , but vve vwould have some other assurance than his Word of Truth, that is , Man vwould have some other stay beside Christ.

3. Wait then thou vvearie Soul on God though thou see no means , for deliverance vwill come ; the vweakling cryes out, because he is not novv delivered , he is quite forsaken ; but God knowvs, thou hast a vvanton vvill and rebellious vvill to be subdued.

4. Nay, vvhen God shevvs nothing but death, and to the eye of man , that life is farthest off ; then is it the nearest : *Abraham* might be vvearie, but God stayed him ; but patience vvith hope, preserved him : Man is vvearie of Gods hand, even almost before he feel it , and dreams of nothing but deliverance ; even like an impatient man , that feeling the biting Corassue, vwould have the plaister taken of , but the Wise Surgeon knowveth, that the rotten flesh must be eaten out ; so God vwill have the flesh to be quiet, and the Spirit strengthened before he remove his Rod.

For a whole burnt offering : By vvich he vvas to be consumed , that there should be no memorial left, for so vvas the lavvs of the burnt-offerings ; So that,

Gods vvill is to be believed and obeyed of man vvithout reservation , and the flesh and World to be crucified vvithout sparing any part thereof of all these that vwould rest in God.

He vwill be loved vvith all the heart , and vve must have no God but him : For this is the great Commandement, *Israel* must not leave a hoof behind in *Egypt*, he vwill be loved above Father or Mother .

1. For look vvhat a man reserves to himself, he dravvs from God, and denieth him ; acknowvledging some other Gods besides him,

him , and so the mind runs after it , as *Adam* did ; and so we halt betwixt two opinions.

2. If it be spared a little, presentlie it gets strength, and will arise again , and so is a halting betwixt two.

3. Man spairs and reserves, but that wherein he thinks there is a good besides God , and so the heart runs after it , and so destroys Faith.

1. Some indeed wholly spare *Isaac* the World, and cannot abide to be touched.

2. Others offer their refuse with *Cain* , but reserve *Isaac* ; nay, believers will still have some hold in the flesh, some reservation ; so hard a thing is it to sacrifice all, they would have part of the World ; some ease, peace, freedom, some assurance of Life and Gospel ; but all these must be sacrificed.

4. Religion that is true is then a simple thing and cannot mix it self with any thing , like quick-silver, or the turtle-dove.

5. Then the obedience of Gods Children if it be simple it is total to all his will, though never so hard to flesh and blood.

For these cannot enter into the Kingdom, and if it be in God, and for God , why then not one as well as another ; for all are alike in him, that is wholly given to God by Faith in him.

So *Abraham* went three dayes journey. And yet saw nothing , that Satan might all this while tempt and trye him, and yet God still preserves him: This is Gods dealing to believing man; So that,

God usually tryes his to the bottom, that they may be saved in the Faith, and shew forth his power of truth and promise to all.

Thus *Job*, and *David*. *Psal.* 77. Thus *Paul*, Christ and his Martyres ; thus was Satan let loose upon *Abraham*.

1. For while man is but crost a little , he runs to other fleshly help , from one shift to another, as here *Abraham* might Reason though I be banished , yet I have the Promise, and though it be long deferred , yet *Isaac* is now born , but here God strikes down all these proppes at once.

2. God doth thus worke good out of evil to man, he lets Satan loose to beat and canvisse man in the flesh, and drive him out, for he is the God of the World , and must rule there, that he may drive man home to God, but if man will make a Covenant with him , and stay there, he will be his Lord, and reward him.

3. Man wil catch hold of any thing before he be well drowned, even

even a Leaf or Reed, but God plungeth him into the deep, and then he calleth from thence.

1. We have not yet resisted unto blood, no temptation hath taken us, but such as man can remove with the World or Reason fixed on the Truth revealed, or qualities; and so we get sin a hiding place in the flesh.

2. Believers need yet a great deal of purging through affliction, for still we retain something, because of which we hope and believe; but this is not plain dealing with God, nor pure believing.

3. But know, that day will come, when God will trye us to the bottom, and leave neither Father nor Mother, Wit, nor Wisdom; we shal be put past all our shifts in the flesh; So that,

4. We see what a doe God hath to bring man low enough; hence it is, that we are not enlivened, enriched, and made free in God, because we are not poor, weak and blind in the flesh, but find ease there and rest.

5. Thus God secretlie upholdeth his Children in affliction, though themselves see not how they are preserved, he still sends Life in Death, who know not how they are raised.

Stay here, and I and the Lad; All left him, and he left these behind; So that,

If man go to ascend to God, and meet him comfortablie in any strait, no coming with flesh and blood; but leave these, and fix on him in naked belief.

So *David* with *Goliath*; so *Christ* was left alone, and none to assist.

1. *For flesh and blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, and His wayes cannot be comprehended.*

2. Fleshly affection draw men to their own ends, but Faith only layes hold on *Christ*; these harden the heart, and give a hope without Faith, which God will not accept.

3. These destroy Faith, for the Soul cannot live on both; thus would worldly men fain take the World to Heaven with them; yea, all are lothe to leave all behind, but would have something to bear them companie, what ever makes for hurting of mans flesh is mans death, let flesh know nothing, nor rule nothing.

Then the Angel said, Stay thy hand. Here *Abraham* is brought to the pits brink, and sees no deliverance, but only is preserved by Faith, they saw nothing but death before them; *Isaac* willing and *Abraham* readie and content, both preserved by Faith, and subjected; So that,

It is impossible for man to meet death willingly, or think thereof; but only when lively power of Faith upholds, and hath killed and crucified the flesh and will thereof by the sufferings of Christ.

This made *Paul* willing to leave this tabernacle; *David* to commend his spirit into the hands of God, and Christ his life to the father, and Martyrs to the fire.

1. For flesh fears destruction of it self, and if it be not overcome'd and preserv'd by another power, it dyes before the time; death makes an end of all and leaves nothing, neither father nor friends, land nor riches, but destroyes all: for as here, *Isaac* is gone, all *Abraham's* children at once, the means of promise, and also if that his life had been herein, he had utterly failed.

2. This is the great lust and enemy to be destroyed, for, *skin for skin. and all that a man hath, will he give for his life;* and yet to this we must all passe, it makes death so fearful to worldly hearts, it leaveth nothing to hold by: other losses leave some hope of recoverie, but this without Redemption; and yet this will come, we see it before our eyes, even death coming when thou must part with thy dearest husband, loving wife, tender children and kind brother, friends, lands, world and all, and see thy self gasping upon thy death-bed; here see *Isaac* on the Altar, and see how thou wilt bear it.

3. Yea, this makes death fearful to believers, because the flesh is not mortified, but lives in them, and desires to live; and because they live not in God, would yet live in the world. All put this day afar off, one is yet lusty and strong, or is yet weak, hopes to recover, and yet never willing to commune with death, because we live not in and by the death of the World; another is old, yet thinks he may yet laste many years; So that,

Only the believing man, in whom life is already overcome, shall die chearfully; as *Paul*, who said, *I can die at Jerusalem:* He sees that death shall free him from the world, the flesh, lust and all.

Stay thine hand. Now God comes with help at a pinch, when it is not expected; if *Abraham* had a desiring expectation of due deliverance this way, God would yet have tryed him further; but seeing past help, and yet believing, he comes; So that,

God comes to help his people in the fittest time , and when man in reason sees no help in the world or in himself : then is God ready at hand.

As at the Red-sea , so to *Elisha* , when the King of *Assiria* had besieged him in *Dothan* ; there were mountains full of Chariots of fire : So to *David* against *Goliath* , *Psal.* 107. Hungry and thirsty , then they cried unto the Lord : The *Publicanes* cried , Lord , be merciful to me , &c.

1. For at first, God made all things out of nothing , and so brings light out of darknesse, and the poor to confound the rich.

2. When the heart hath passed all fleshly power, then he rests in faith ; for he hath nothing to trust to, &c.

3. Thereby are the sufferings of Christ accomplished in the Saints in earth , as with the Martyrs ; when friends mourned , strangers bewailed , acquaintance pitied , their adversaries boiled in all wrath ; and all hope of life past : yet then was God with them , and they joyful ; as with the man that cried , *Austin* , He is come.

4. Yea, thus doth God weaken flesh, by dissannulling the hope thereof ; and makes his power known in fleshlie weaknesse : for he both secretlie upholds at present , and sends help when all is past hope.

S E R M O N XXI.

Isa. 9. 6 , 7, 8. For unto us a child is born , and unto us a son is given ; and the Government shall be upon his shoulders.

IN this Chapter he comforts the Church against all darknesse and desolation, threatned in the seventh and eighth chapters ; and that by promise of the *Messiah* : alluding to these calamities , that came both by *Tilgath* , *Pileazer* , 2 Kings

15. And that great *Salmanazer* , King of *Assiria* , where all *Israel* was led captive , 2 Kings 17. And thirdly , yet greater, when *Zenacharib* came upon them , in the dayes of *Hezekiah* , with two hundred thousand souldiers , and railed on the living God , even in that darkness, when they had no hope of safety. Then *Hezekiah* spred his letter before the Lord , and *Isaiah* the

Prophet brought the message of safetie, and that without the power of *Israel* or any man God would overcome; and so sent his Angel, and slew one hundred fourscore and fifty thousand of the *Assirians* Armies: and here saith he, shall our deliverance be. He shewes, it shall not be by mans power, no more than that; For thou multiplied the Nations, that is of *Israel*; they had a greater Army than before, yet more afraid: but now they rejoyce as men in harvest. He shewes the reason, for the yoke and burden of the oppressor is removed, and that without the power of *Israel*, even as in the day of *Midian*; then,

A comparison of these, every battel is with blood, but this shalt be with consuming fire; Thou hast multiplied the Nations, but not increased the joy. *Jerusalem* had again gathered strength, yet behold, greater fear than before, 1 King. 19.

First, for he never left afflicting, till he had wasted all their strength, and put them past it; till they bowed down in humility and fear, and spread the letter before the Lord; then comes the Angel; so with us: So that,

It is not increasing our strength, wisdom or any gift, that easeth or rejoyceth the heart indeed; but man walking in faith, fear and humility and love, shall be comforted in God: *Phil. 1. 6.*

Thus the *Philistins* and *Goliath*, and *David*, but still worse thereby; So the fool, Luk. 12. Jerem. 10. *Let not the wise man rejoyce.*

1. For we are kept by the power of Faith unto Salvation.

2. It is the mourner that is comforted, not the joyful; yea, the poor that is enriched, and the rich sent empty away; *Sowe in tears, and reap in joy.*

3. For hereby is the great power of God manifested.

1. Thus we see the World still multiplies riches and wealth, but not joy increased: so we all strive for this and that guilt, knowledge, righteousness, &c. And so we multiply our strength and conceit of Power in man, as though he would overcome the King of *Asshur*; yet this still riseth in man, but is the greatest opposite to Faith of all things. 2. Happy is he that casts down all, and spreads the heart before the Lord, who in himself trembles in every thing, and flies by faith

faith to God; the Angel shall come in time, and man shall overcome, as *Gideon* did, Judges 27. God took from him all his strength; as,

1. All that were fearful, and all that lay down to drink; so with us

1. He takes away Infidelity, which was fearful.

2. Earthlinesse, and moves man to suffer, and then in that wearied and tyred estate, he gives victorie to *Gideon*. So that,

Mans victorie is obtained in weaknesse of man by the power of God; and till God have taken from him that strength and wisdom whereby he standeth, he never conquers: as

Paul; when I am weak, then am I strong; of myself not able to think a good thought, but through his grace able to do all things.

1. For fear and weaknesse goes before faith, then faith follows; and if faith be preserved, then man is safe: but if a man waxe strong in conceit; then farewell faith and fear, and then hardnesse comes.

All the whole Scripture workes to bring man down, that he might rest in God, though he feel no strength, though he feel no reason, though he be in darknesse; yet the promise in Christ dwells in all these.

2. For God is not in thunder and earthquake and winds, but in the soft, still voice, and resting heart of man in him.

1. But man hath witt and lives by it; will, and followes its power, and guardes; but all will fail: For where Infidelity is, or those that went on in worldlinesse, these were sent back; for there was thirty two thousand, but ten thousand went: and of these all, but three hundred that kneeled down to drink.

So with us, most turn back from Christs battel through infidelity; and others that seem to follow Christ, most are subdued by the World; only a few content with present state follow the Lord in Faith: For in the most things we do fear through distrust, or else are stopped and cast back through the love of ease that we overcome not, as in the day of *Midian*.

God sends his spirit into tender and soft hearts, but all things else are dry; and then when the heart is refreshed and strengthened, he sends his blessing in all he takes in hand.

To *Hezekiah* the sign was, this year eat whatsoever groweth of it self, and the next year without sowing; So to us,

He feeds us of his own fulnesse without any help of man or nature, and then enables man to be a husband in the Church

of Christ; and this shal be like joy in harvest-tide, Psal. 33.

These battels were with noise and tumbling in blood, but this by the feeling of Wrath and Indignation, which at last shal fall upon the power of Satan through the love of Christ, and consume them: *For unto us a Child is born.* Here is a Prophecie of Christ and his Kingdom and Government.

1. His Person is described unto us, with his Title and Office.

2. His Kingdom and manner thereof.

3. The cause, or fountain of all this zeal of Love unto us: here he shews the Proprietie and Right that believers have in Christ, and by this Union the Victore comes; So that,

Christ truely born to man, and living and ruling in the heart of man, and man subject to Christ, is the Food and Fountain of all good, Wisdom and Happinesse to man.

He is the Seed of the Woman that breaks the Serpents head, He is our Wisdom and Righteousnesse, and Peace and our Life; For all live through him, *Paul* through him was able to do all things, *He is the way, the Truth and the Life*, Joh. 14. *If you abide in Me, and my word abide in you, ask, and it shall be given you:* Christ is that Word of Faith by which all things are established and made; He is the Light and Life of Man; So that,

When the ministry of the Word is formed to the Image of Christ, and that Word lives in man, then enjoyes he all that good and freedom promised in that Word.

For look what Christ was, and did actually and bodily in the World, that he is, and doth spiritually in the heart of man: He came by the will and promise of the Father, he was born, not of the will of the flesh; He wrought miracles to the believing man, so in us; gives sight to the blind; He taught and made known the Will, Love, and Purpose of the Father to the World: So in us; He was subject to live in love, so in us; He suffered freely, so us he enables and makes conquerors.

So it is plain, that the birth of Christ is the beginning and Fountain of mans happinesse and freedom; and the Life of Christ with the Father, the life of happinesse; and the Death of Christ, the accomplishment of mans blessednesse and victorie.

See then, how all the whole truth of God begins and ends in one. That which was promised to *Adam*, and *Abraham*, is Prophesied of: Here is born in time, and sent to everie believer, therefore

therefore, all our running about conceits, buildings and thoughts, and imaginations, and inventions, are but vain blasts; for here is all that is substantial.

But who hath believed our report, may Christ say; for, First, We hear of Christ born, baptized, persecuted and crucified, &c.

But not to us; nay, we know this Christ after the flesh, we think well of him, and love the thoughts of him; but not born to us:

Nay, we frame a Christ, and seem to worship him, but not given to us; nay, we have a conceit that he hath done all for us, but not born in us; we defend him, and plead for him, we dispute of him, we talk of him, we read of him; but not born to us.

This teacheth, that Christ was promised of God, and sent in fulnesse of time, and then his spirit sent into the hearts of men.

So there is a waiting for the promise under the Law; but in the fulnesse of time he shall be born and given.

For he came, when man was out of hope; for there was nothing but vexation under the *Maccabees*, and the *Romans*, and then came a deliverer, and so to all men; When *Sarah* was past age, and without hope, then *Isaac* is born.

So, when thou art past hope, and sees no Reason, then shall Christ be born to thee, for that is the fulnesse of time, and till then, the fulnesse of time is not come: And we see that Christ is nothing to man, till he be born in man, that the living Word of the Father live and rule in him beyond all Reason and Imagination of flesh: For no Reason can be given of Christ to be born of a Virgin; nor that man should believe life in death, or a guilty man to be delivered.

A Son is born; Here is the promise of a *Messiah*, and this already accomplished, both visibly to the World, and spiritually to believers; So that,

No power of the adversary or flesh is able to make void the Word of Truth, and Promise, nor shake the heart of man; stayed thereon by Faith.

As *Abraham* believed the Word against plain reason.

So the Promise of *Caanan*, *Pharaoh* on the one side, and enemies in the way, and fourtie Kings in *Canaan* resisted; yet thither they must. Heaven and Earth must passe away, but not that Word of Truth.

1. For this puritie of Faith, under the Crosse, when all fights against it, yet it stands.

2. By

2. By this, God is magnified, and man hath assurance of rest therein; as when man believes Gods truth, though never so unlike; God preserves that man; For can any man stay a showre of Rain; take heed of fighting against God.

3. Be subject and stay here, though thou see no likely-hood, not striving what thou would have, but waiting what and when God will do his Will.

4. Here is the stay of believers, though they see no rest, yet they wait on God, and know, that in fulnesse of time the Child shall be born.

5. But though we have a sure word, we are lothe to stay the fulnesse of time, but now man would be comforted, and then eased; but thou must be more weak, thy Wisdom and Righteousnesse must be troden down, that nothing but God and his Truth may live in thee.

A Son born; Some will have this meant of *Hezekiah*, or *Isaiah*; but it agrees not with the Text, but only of Christ the Word of the Father, which took our nature, that he might redeem us; and let us see the subjection and losse of all to way of freedom: These two natures joynd in Christ by an Hypostatical Union, made a perfect Christ, as flesh and spirit makes in *Moria* a Christian; these not by confounding their natures, but by right ordering of both, yet remain distinct; the power of the God-head shining through the Man-hood, Ordering and Ruling, and Guiding in subjection to the Fathers Will. So in us,

Religion or Christ born in man, is not the confounding of nature in man, as with most beginning in the Spirit, but ending in the flesh; as, First,

In our glorious notions not rising from Christ, stirring up our present passions onlie flesh.

Mans freedom is not helped by flesh at all, but subjection onlie. Manie Sons born to man, but *Ishmaels* or *Esaus*; few have Christ formed or born in them.

The government is upon his shoulders. That is, the whole Rule whereby his Kingdom is ordered, is in him onlie, Joh. 5. *The Father hath given all government to the Son*; So that,

The whole power of governing and guiding man, rests in Jesus Christ, and is enjoyed by Faith in him.

All power is given to me both in Heaven and Earth, to him belongs dominion power and glorie.

1. For why he is King and Head of the Church.
2. By him only the power of Satan is subdued.
3. He is the corner-stone of all buildings.

Now his povver is not of the flesh, for that vvas kept vweak in him, and at last so dyeth in us; His Kingdom is not of this World, but Righteousnesse, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14. *By righteousnesse of Faith and righteousnesse of Love:* as peace in the heart, with subjection under the Crosse, joy in assurance of the love; and joy in tribulation.

But most are not governed by Christ, but by their own Witt, Will, World and Flesh.

Where then is the power of man, whereby he thinks to obtain Life? It remains in Christ, onlie enjoyed by Faith from day to day; else how doth Christ rule?

But most will have the government upon their own shoulders: He rules all by the Word of Truth, Psal. 45. *His Scepter is a right Scepter*, his Word returns not in vain, he bears up all by his mighty Word.

He shall be called wonderful. Here is his title and of admiration, and to be referred to all his Wonders in his Wisdom and Counsel, in his Power, Love, and Peace; So that,

So the way of Christ in bringing man back from death to life, is a wonderful way unknown to the World and Flesh; only known by Christ in the Word of Truth, Isa. 55.

1. *My wayes are not your wayes*, but look how far it is a wonderful way, that he perscribes in Matth. 16.

To denie our selves, to take up his crosse, lose our life; It is called the mystery of the Kingdom, for Genesis 3. He ordained that man should never by that way of the flesh enter into life, but by another way that kills the flesh.

2. The way of Christ is opposite to the way of the World, that his glorie may appear: For *Israel*, by want of Faith, stood in fear of the Armie of the *Philistins*, but *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer only discomfited by Faith, a wonderful power of God.

3. Thus God makes himself known in the earth by his great wonderful works; now Christs way is wonderful, not only in his birth in earth without a Father, in Heaven without a Mother; but also in his miracles which were great: As in disputing at twelve years old, and fasting fourtie dayes; but also in his ministry, that a silly man opposing the whole Hirarchie of the *Pharisees* and

Jews

Jews, yet spake with authority to the subduing of all, so in his Apostles for the wonderful evidence of the Truth, doth for the present, dash all contrary power, though afterward it rise again: He is also wonderful in the administration of his Kingdom, as he came to give us light, that sat in darknesse and obscuritie.

1. To give Life, and yet he dyed himself; and in Reason, was overcome in death, but that Faith believed the Resurrection.

2. To make us Rich, and yet he himself Poor.

3. To make us free, and himself bound.

4. To comfort us, and yet he himself cryed out for comfort, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*; It must needs be some wonderful way that Christ hath to worke a Redemption for me, and this by an unspeakable power and love, which is seen in all mans straits; as in prayer and affliction, temptation and death: as,

1. Man cryes and prayes to be eased like *Paul* for a prick in the flesh, God hears by a secret power, and grace and faith in *Paul*.

2. In affliction he layes Load, and yet preserves by feeling the Fathers love.

3. In temptations justifies, and yet we feel no killing of the flesh.

4. Death comes, and yet we live in him.

1. Away then with that reasonable Religion, Christs way is above, that man hath a readie way of Religion to do well, and know much, and so hath an opinion in flesh, but not a stay to the Soul; also, a reason of love, as his neighbour and friends, but no reason to love Enemies: It must be a wonderful power of Christ that must leperate man from himself in reason; it were likest that man should speed best that comes righteous to him, but not so he that comes a sinner.

2. We see then the necessitie of Faith and the nature of it, that it is not a reasonable perswasion, but a powerful cleaving to Christ; and no dealing with God but by Faith: for Reason can make nothing of the wayes of Christ.

3. Marvel then not though the World cannot away with it, the Wisdom of the World counts it foolishnesse, but Faith knows that Reason is a foolish counseller; this is another title and propertie, or declaration of the Wisdom of the Father that was with him; he is the Counseller, the Prophet of the Church, to

Teach it Wisdom, and guide it in the way of peace.

So that the Fountain of all wisdom and counsel is in God, and none wise in matter of Religion and God, but they that are wise in, and truly know Christ.

In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which are conveyed unto man as he believes and waits; for he is made of God to us wisdom and righteousness, &c.

If any obey my will, he shall know, whether this Doctrine be of God?

1. For he was in the bosom of the Father, and sent out to counsel and advise deceived men to turn to God again.

2. Man is blind, even the wisest of the World; and the crosse of Christ is their greatest misery; for it is foolishnesse to them; and they cannot approve it; but the World thinks not so: for, who are counted so wise as the children of this World, who fight against God.

1. So God hath shewed the way to prosper, that is to believe, trust and obey; but the wicked say not, but cark, care, and oppress: but the way of life, is a denial and losse of life and will: But they say, Save life and will; for man will either find a way of his own, or help God in his way.

2. Some are wise above the Gospel and Christ, and will needs see into Gods Secrets with their fleshlie eyes; as *Arminius*, who will needs set rules and laws to God, which neither *Arminian* or witty man can do; and it is the very quintessence of witt that under-propps man, and this more crosseth faith than any thing: the greatest Contemplatives, the greatest Idolaters; saith *Luther*.

3. How lothe is man to be a fool, but he would appear to be somewhat: how he strains his Wit, and vents his conceits, that he may appear to know; Such a one knows more from curious searching and bateing his brains; than from Christ in the heart. There is two Counsellors to man.

1. Satan adviseth the Worldings to care and deceive, and the Wanton, to follow his pleasure; the Drunkard, his pots; the Hypocrite, his righteousness: yea, as an Angel of light he shines, as a false light to puff up himself.

2. But Christ counselleth otherwise.

1. To forsake the World and all.

2. To believe in him alone.

3. To love him.

4. To

4. To love one another. Wisdom without Christ can do nothing, but fill the heads, and that with conceits and opinions; but he is wise that is counselled by Christ, yet attending on him in that blindnesse of his Soul by faith, he shal be enlightned and know the will and secrets of the Lord; but man will needs know these before the time.

An Exposition of some Verses of the fifth Chapter of Matthew, the Quality and Disposition of these that are Blessed.

Blessed are the pure in Spirit, consisting in what state.

1. The qualitie, is *pure in Spirit*; that is, whose Spirits have nothing to rest on, nor comfort in it; but worn out of all hope and stay in the flesh, is destitute of all help; but waits onlie on relief on God: So that,

He only, whose heart is purged by the Word from all stayes and hopes in the flesh, is truly a Subject of mercy, and shall be enriched; and the only Guest at his Supper.

So the Prodigal, we see the poor receives the Gospel; the full stomack lotheth the honney-comb, Isa. 66. *To him will I look that is of a contrite heart and humble spirit, Isa. 55. He that hath no money, come and buy.*

Poor, blind, miserable and naked; but on the contrary, as the Elder-brother, all is mine, I am rich enough: *So not many rich, not many mighty, &c. but poor.*

A small thing is welcome to a poor man, when the rich despiseth great gifts: now the poor man is naked, nothing to cover him; famished, nothing to fill his belly, as the Prodigal was, unable to help himself; and thence hopes for help.

Rich and full hearts have no room for Christ, when man conceits of some quality in himself, and whereby he hopes. The cause why we are not helped is, because we are not poor enough.

See the bounty of God, who is ready to help the needful; the misery of poor in the world that find no help, is, because they seek it in the World.

Blessed are they that mourn. Here is the second sort of blessed men, not the merry Pharisee, but the mourning humble and dejected men: this follows the former, like an Orphan destitute, poor, none to help, mourns: So that,

So that, he that mourns and weeps in himself, and finds no comfort in himself, or the World; he rests in God by Faith, but shal be comforted in Gods time.

God looks to him that is of a humble Spirit, as *Hagar* sitting and weeping at the Well, because she was comforted. In the Law, they brought sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, and there wept and mourned till the atonement came, Psal. 102. *They that go forth weeping shall return rejoycing.*

For this argues a repenting heart, and forethinking of the time mispent, therefore the Kingdom of God is come near; These men reverence the World and themselves, and finding no hope thereby, crye and weep for help; for these hearts lye open for comfort, when the light merrie hearts despise God and promise.

1. This is not a mourning for losse or crosse.
2. Nor a howling because of miserie only.
3. Nor desperate as *Judas*, but a fight or sensible beholding of guilt and weaknesse, and time mispent condemning himself.

2. A burthen lying on, and seeing no means to recover.

3. With strong cryes for mercie and pardon, but most are far from this; for fulnesse hath made us merrie, everie man rejoycing in his portion; First, the Worliding is merrie in his thriving.

2. The wanton in his pleasure and lust, the Hypocrite in his conceited Righteousnesse: Now, we all go forth rejoycing, and come in weeping; and believers often overtaken with this, that is, in a fond ligh tnesse without sense of themselves; sometimes resting secur ely, because they think God will come, but mourns not; sometimes lifted up with a conceit of what the Spirit enjoys not.

But happie he that sits mourning like a turtle-dove after his God, and never merrie without him; so he shal be comforted: This is reserved in Gods time and hand, wherein, see the impatience of weaklings; who, because he comes not now, are ready to cast off all: and others, who will needs appoint the time, and lothe to stay the fulnesse thereof: And this God will do according to his own wil. & not thine. limiting God; destroyeth and crosseth Faith; there must be a going forth of thy self, weeping that thou hast so long fought against God, and returning a

to

to God, who will meet thee with joy and gladnesse; that thou hast found him whom thy Soul loves, but it must be as in Canticles.

When thou hast left expectation thereof, we all desire to know that God loves us, thence believe, that he doth love us.

Blessed are the meek; This is opposed to the pride of the *Pharisees*, who are lift up above others.

1. But lowly and meek minded men, who are humble and lowlie in themselves, are the only happie men, *Isa. 66. With such God dwells.* They are Gods Saints, as the *Publican*, and he that humbles himself is fitted for all estates, his mind framed to all; not seeking to bring things to his mind, but things are brought to his mind.

2. He onlie is capable and lives by mercie, that hath no good thought of himself, this is not a loftnesse of nature, and fretting within, nor a Pharisaical hanging down the head, nor lurking quiet, like a dog under a cudgel; But a simple and true understanding of himself, his weaknesse and vilenesse, and so adjudging of himself, and justifying others.

This reproveth that high minded pride and conceit of our own, yea, because we think basely of others; thence we have a good conceit of ourselves: This is not simple plain dealing, but the most quiet way is, when a man is kept low in himself, and still exalted in God, hereby nothing happens; but he sees he hath deserved it, he justifies God in all his wayes.

He shall inherit the earth. That is, the good of all blessings, and be blessed in all his wayes and creatures on earth, for his mind hath no far reach, and so he is content with any estate: against proud mindes, who enjoy no good in any thing, their mind is still above their estate, and they still in want, and they that are lifted up in all they enjoy, are like beggers on horseback. The way of prosperitie is, when the mind is low, for then it is out of Satans reach; as Christ was by suffering, as a Lamb overcame all.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst. Hence the mind feeling a want and hungering after Righteousnesse in Christ, is blessed, and shall be satisfied, *Isa. 55. Psal. 63.* Which hunger is,

1. A panting of the stomack for want of moisture.

2. A

2. A desire of food above all.
3. A longing and fainting till he be satisfied, and how sweet is Christ to him; This Righteousnesse is.

1. Of Faith.
2. Inward rectitude.
3. Outward holinesse, that so he may be one with Christ in the Covenant of love, unitie of Will, and life of Christ, to the glory of the Father.

But we all faint after the World, nothing can satisfie; these men are never satisfied, but the other shall be satisfied; he shall have an hundred fold here, &c. Jam. 4. 5. *They ask me, and obtain not, because it is to spend on lusts: wait, thou hungriest, and in his time he will come, and that shortly, when thou art separated from all other: Thy Soul can be satisfied with no other; thus like a loving Wife, longing after her husbands coming home.*

Blessed are the merciful. Here is another sort of blessed men, that is, whole hearts are brought down; that out of sense of their own misery and weaknesse, sin and rebellion; they become tender hearted men, and pitiful and merciful to others that are in any strait: So that,

Tender hearted men are blessed men, and fit for Gods mercy, Psal. 41. *Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy.* Psal. 112. *A good man is merciful and lendeth.* Isa. 57. 1. *Merciful men are taken away from the evil to come; I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat,* Mat. 25. 42. And Christ so pitied poor, blind and lame, desolate men; and was ever ready to help, that he might draw all men to depend on mercy.

For he whose heart dwells in love, dwells in God; in nothing do we more resemble Christ, who was ever disposed thereunto; even when his Disciples would have hindred him; See what this is.

1. There may be liberality out of pride, and yet no love, I Cor. 13.

2. There may be a tender and open nature, and yet no mercy.

But this not a tender hearted disposition from nature, but from a true sight of our own vilenesse and unworthinesse and sense of Gods mercy in Christ, sensible of others miseries and willingnesse and readinesse to help, according to our power, with.

without pinching, grudging, or base respect : such is Gods and Christs love to us.

1. The ground, Gods mercie by Faith, breaking the heart and working Life in us.

2. The nature is pitiful, free , open-hearted, helpful.

3. The object is Want, Miserie, Wrong, Injury, Woe.

Then woe to mercielesse worldings , who are sensible of no mans miserie but their own , as a hard-hearted userer; a cloffe-fisted niggard, grinding Land-lord : yea, mercieless, who, with *Judas* grudge at parting with any thing, and though they professe kindnesse , yet when need comes , hearts and purses pinch together.

See that heartlesse shew of Love and Faith without the power thereof , when it comes to tryal , that when it comes to parte it and *Mammon* , that was never parted ; it goes to the quick: as if a man should part with life and all ; and hence so manie excuses; as I have not, now I have a charge , &c. When, if a man would forbear idle expences and his surfeting , it would provide for all the poor in a Paroch.

Object. They are all lazie people.

Answ. It is for want of thy education but maintenance is love.

Thus we see Christ is full of talking, believing men, and worldly knowledge; everie man full of opinions and high thoughts, but no love. This Religion is in vain ; yea, most men love all men till they grow poor, but then casts him off, like those, Luke 5. *That called rich friends* , &c. So we lend , give and help those that need not , but to furhter their covetousnesse ; but from poor, turn away.

But man hath such love for himself, that he hath none for others, but *Paul* bids, *put on bowels of mercie and tenderneße*, &c.

1. Consider the estates of others , and put ours in their case.

2. Gods mercie to thee, thou rich, and they poor.

3. That thou shalt never be poorer for it ; and that thou shalt obtain mercie both of God and man, not for this ; but the word is such. So that,

Gods mercie and goodnesse shall not be a wanting , and mans heart shall be open towards merciful men , and they shall not want , Psal. 37. *I never saw the rigtebous forsaken*; That is, merciful men.

1. For the hearts of all men do blesse them.

2. They

2. They live in sense of miserie and weaknesse, and so sensible of mercie, but most men live of and by themselves, and find no need of mercie, and so mercie is shut against them.

3. Happie he that waits still for this, it cannot be wanting, for these judge themselves, and justifie God.

4. Suffer all things patiently.

5. And are open-hearted to pray to God, and shew mercie to others.

Blessed are the pure in heart. These are opposed to the Hypocrisie of the *Pharisees*, which under shew of Religion, reserved to themselves rotten hearts and the World therein, which so muffled their mindes, that they saw nothing: Puritie is a metaphor taken from neatter mettall, &c. Which it not mingled with any filth, but clear from the Fountain; So we say, Pure water like gold, and that is seperated from all other things, and is simple; So that,

Poor and simple minded men, who walk in simplicitie of Religion, is blessed therein, James 3. 1. Wisdom from above is, First, pure, then peaceable, that is the seed in good ground, that is, good honest and simple hearts, 1. Joh. 3. *He that hath this hope purgeth himself as he is pure*, for the heart joyned, or mixed with any other thing, mars it.

2. This was *Adams* simplicitie that is joyned to God onlie, which puritie is a mind cleaving to nothing but God only, and simple truth, like a wife to her husband, expecting nothing but what he is.

3. Intention upright, though occasion failing, there is a puritie Legal, and Evengelical, the one is in Rules, the other in Faith and Love; singling out the heart to Christ onlie: the heart is pure, when it is not mingled with its own desires and lusts, and the pure Faith believeth God without this or that, a pure love without condition, or end.

4. A pure zeal for God onlie. Away then with all glistring Religion, to cover rotten hearts with.

But we deal not simply in any thing, but have self-respects and seekings, seeking our selves; for we deal not simply in any thing. The pure heart then is he that sees that iniquitie in himself; that he lothes himself; and so is purged by the Laver of Regeneration.

They shall see God. This is not by curious comprehension, but by simple believing; that is, that God would shew himself in mercie, love and wisdom to them; So that,

The poor and simple believing heart trulie understands the way of God, and sees him in his goodnesse; and God reveals Secrets to them that fear him, and to none else; *Psal. 25.*

1. None hath seen God but he, none knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, *Psal. 36.* *In his light we shall see light, for self-knowledge and lust blinds the most of all.* 1 Cor. 8. *He that thinks he knows something, knows nothing at all; he that will become wise, must become a fool: God chooseth fools.*

2. If the mind cleave, or look at any thing else, it draws a vail that it sees nothing. There are some that imagine a shape, and so seem to see blindly, attending in faith upon them; the light shines.

Thus we are all full of knowledge and false light, but have not pure hearts; we must be wise, as Serpents; and innocent as Doves. For, if man see God by Faith; he trusts, loves and fears, and is subject to him; all knowledge else, leaves a man where he was, save this; it lifts him up against God.

See the way how man is blinded, he hath a self-desire of his own good, overruling, which sets witts a working to find that good under the Sun. This bears off God, and so lights hold of Religion; and so strains all his power to comprehend this God and good in him, and becomes a Master; and so rules and orders it, according as he thinks it may best make for his good, not knowing what it is to receive freely, and live by faith. Give me then a pure heart, and a simple believing mind; for thats worth all knowledge: without this, all knowledge else leaves man, that he dare not trust, nor love that thing which he sees: Yet, this is all that he hunts after, rather to know after the flesh, than to believe by faith.

Blessed are the Peace-makers: Opposed against the *Pharisees* bu-
sie pride, and judging others: Yea, Christ could not be quiet in life for them: So that,

Christs Religion is a peaceable Religion, and makes men peace-
able, James 3. *Wisdom from above is pure and peaceable.*

1. For it pulls down pride.

2. It sets man at work with himself, and none else.

3. It

3. It layes low the World , which sets all at strife ; yet th
quiets all.

1. Yea, though not of the same opinion, yet peaceable.

2. Though not familiar , yet peaceable.

1. This is against that Religion , thats nothing but busie quar
relling for victorie in this or that opinion ; and that only in op
position to Church, striving about Christs coat.

2. These that are busie with others, not themselves; that start
quarrels, and suits for trifles.

3. Religion is not against peace , but for the peace of a Land

4. They are at enmity with none, but themselves; yet bold and
flout in Christs cause, as Martyrs.

5. Decay of Religion is the cause of all contention; walk peace
able, and meddle with thy self.

Seek peace , and prevent variance ; and lose any thing rather
than peace.

S E R M O N XXII.

I Sam. Chap. 15. Ver. 13. *And Samuel came unto Saul , and Saul
said unto him ; Blessed be thou of the Lord , I have , &c.*

THis Chapter declares Gods dealing with *Saul* , for his
double dealing in the matter of *Amaleck* : These *A-
malakites* were those enemies which first withstood
the passage of *Israel* at Mount *Seir* , as they passed to-
wards *Canaan* ; against whom, *Moses* and *Aaron* and *Je-
shua* warred, who would have driven *Israel* back again into *Egypt* ;
against whom the Lord threatned that he would destroy them
from off the earth , and have War with *Amalek* , from generati-
on to generation , *Exod.* 17. 14. To those the Lord sends *Saul*
to destroy them ; and he dealeth haltingly therein, and for that
is cut off. Further note , that these *Amalakites* were of the seed
of *Esau* : For *Amaleck* was the Son of *Elyphaz* , *Esau*'s eldest Son,
which he had by a concubine , *Gen.* 36. So that they were the *E-
domites* , who were still enemies to *Israel*. Here is *Esau* against *Jacob*
still , that is, the of-spring of the flesh hated of God, hunting af-
ter the world ; So that,

Such and so are the corrupt will, & fleshlie lusts of man; like these

Amalakites

Amalekites; born of the flesh, hated of God, and forsaken; hunting after World, fighting against the spirit of man; heir of the Promise, and hindering in the way towards the Lord of rest. Nay, and when they were to enter into *Canaan*, they stopped the way; and after, when they were entred, they disturbed *Israels* peace, as here; So that,

Those enemies must be subdued and routed out, before man can have any rest in the Land of the living, 1 Pet. 2. *Fight against the Soul.* Gal. 5. *War against the spirit.* These have fleshlie reason for their kingly will, and affections for their Captains.

1. These like *Amaleck*, one while seeks comfort to the flesh; cannot abide to want.

2. Sometimes to deny God through carnal reason; nay, in believers, when we should walk with God in assurance of Faith and subjection of love; then starts up some fleshly power or other, either a man hath some worldly power to follow, or some fleshlie will to stick to; or quietnesse, ease and peace to preserve; or, something that he dotes on, and follows not God according to the Covenant.

1. This shews that we have not rest in our God only; because the Sons of *Esau*: the *Edomites* yet remain in our Land, and oppress the way of God and of Christ; And why not peace in thy heart? because the *Amalakites* yet live in thy heart, enemies within thee: Thou fighs without, with this want and that wrong, this inconveniencie and distrust, that do daily vex thee. For take away these, and rest will come in all losses and croiles. O that man would once war against himself to destroy those enemies! Thou art busie against every body but thy self, when thou should be against no body but thy self, or else against something else; as avoiding this or that: Nay, stay thy self and take up these, and so shalt thou have peace; but these must be destroyed without any reserving.

1. If it first draw from the Covenant and Faith in Christ.

2. If it strengthen thy own will.

3. If it make flesh wanton, and so harden the heart, kill it.

Nay, Christ will destroy that kingly reason, which will need fight against God and all his people: And that when God hath said, *Israel* shall rest; *Amalakites* saith no. So this turns the truth of God into a lye.

We see then that the Church need not fear her Enemies,
for

for God will roote them out of the earth, and have continual War with them that withstand his Truth and Covenant; so that while thou sticks to him thou art safe: nay, and he will warr with the seed of the flesh in man. Doth he war against lust, and will dallie by his word? Nay, God is, and will be an enemy thereto; for the Law condemns it to death, and the Gospel is the Executioner of the Law, and kills it in the heart of man; but if man will spare these, God will destroy man with them, for they must be destroyed, do thou what thou can to save them; for all flesh is grasped, and thou thinks to preserve them, yet they must down, or else *Israel* and *Saul* himself must perish.

But the power whereby thou seest, that is *Moses*, praying and crying to God, gave them one blow; and then at last *Joshua*, even *Jesus*, the Captain of Faith, hewed them in pieces: So that the power is,

1. Prayer.

2. Faith waiting on God, when the heart is turned to pray then victorie, but not by the power of *Israel*, nor sword of *Saul* but by Gods grace and arme, *vers* 7. 13.

Blessed be thou of the Lord, I have performed the Commandments of the Lord. Now when *Samuel* came to see what *Saul* had done and to make known what God had determined; *Saul* begins to justify himself, though he knew himself guiltie; and to keep peace within and approbation without; So that,

So it is with all naturally, that when God finds out man by the light of his Truth, that man labours naturally to justify himself, and to cover his guilt, though to his destruction, rather than to confesse, that he may have mercy.

So to *Adam*; so the *Pharisees* and the *Lawyer* willing to justify themselves.

1. For there is no power in nature to condemn it self.

2. Flesh cannot be, but it must needs have hold of something.

3. And the Soul must have something to uphold, for the natural of iniquity is in every one: We all desire approbation. Thus all the World is busie in sewing fig-leaves to hide their own guilt.

And this stops the course of Faith and Prayer, every one labours still to make good what he doth get; peace within, approbation of others: Yet this approbation we all desire; and so make st of the worst, if we may keep credit.

Hence so manie excuses as here in *Saul*, when we seem to condemn our selves, then we justifie our selves; and hope, because of our confession to find mercie. It is a great point of simplicity to do good, and not to have an eye to it; but still here ariseth a thought of being something, because of that; everie one is approving of the good, but thinks none of the evil in themselves, and so imagins a power in themselves, which destroy Faith.

It is but a poor comfort that man gets by his obedience to the Law; nay, God will find out manie a blaiting Lust, and Iniquitie in thy heart, as hereafter.

What meaneth then: Here *Samuel* discovers his Hypocrisie, for he discovers, wherein he had failed; So that,

When man hath justified himself, and hid himself in the depth of his own counsel, yet there remains in man a Legion of Rebellion, which hinders his peace, and which God will find out in the end; as to *Adam*, and the Young Man, and the Rich Fool.

1. For mans pride ariseth from ignorance in himself.
2. *Adam* slips over these easily, and with little notice.
3. After Faith, and a desire to obey God, yet there remains a rebellious flesh, and ease, and peace, which he would preserve.

Thus we all keep up a conceit of our selves; but then what means this following of the World, this envie, hatred, these wringings and pinchings, and covetousnesse?

What means then *Saul* seeking to justifie himself?

Samuel discovers his Hypocrisie; And that by bringing before him the spoil that he had reserved underneath, and as in *Saul*, so in us; *Saul* had done something, but there rested a whole herd to be destroyed; So that,

When a man hath tasted of Gods love and mercie, and it may be hath inclined to do Gods will, yet there is a troupe of rebellious lusts and affections underneath, which both darkens the light of Faith, and keeps mans Soul in bondage; and either they or we must be destroyed.

Thus to the young man, *Matth.* 19. The rich fool, and *Adam*.

1. For all men, like *Israel*, think they should have rest, so soon as they are passed the Red-Sea; when, alace, there are bitter waters to drink; hunger and thirst to be endured, and the *Amalakites* to be slain.

Here is the daily exercise and power of Faith and of Christ

in man, in subduing these enemies under foot, to the perfecting of our freedom, and establishing everlasting Righteousnesse.

That man daily feeling these Rebels within him, may see his Weaknesse and Rebellion, and may flee daily from himself to God for victorie: For he that partakes of Christs death once through Faith to his Redemption, by the power of the same death, dyes daily; that so he may live into God.

Thus deal Hypocrites, when looking upon their own righteousness, grow high minded, and strongly presumptuous, not feeling these base filthy lusts, but lye underneath; nay, thus we imagine to our selves an opinion more by a thousand times, than we enjoy indeed: Thus are those deceived, who tasting some sweetness of Faith and Gods love, sit down and think all things is done, and Heaven obtained, when indeed they then shrink from God, and themselves too; and then arise a Legion of Lusts that are unkilld.

There is then a beginning of steadfastnesse in going on in Religion, these beginnings may utterly fail where the others follows not; there is a believing to Righteousnesse, but there must be a believing by the same faith, and a daily feeding on Gods goodness and truth.

1. And hereby appears how apt man is to flatter himself without cause, thinking all is well, when it is nothing so; When the Prophet comes, and by the Word of Truth divides betwixt the marrow and the bone: For thou sayest, Thou believest God and thy confidence is in Christ, and that he is, and will be a Father unto thee; but what means the leaning to, and looking at the works of thy hand, or qualitie of heart, and increase of confidence thereby: Why then is there such seeking for, and trusting to thine own power? why art thou then so vexed for want, joy, peace and fulnesse? Why then dost thou so dote upon the World? so lifted up in fulnesse, and cast down in want? Thou sayest, Thou loves God and Christ, and his Word; what means then this self-love? wherein thou hast alwayes a self aim?

2. This casting off Christ; and seeking ease in the flesh: What means then this little respect to the Gospel, and so careful for all things else?

3. What means this censuring, and judging and condemning others;

thers, this opening their shame, and this preying into their faults; this back-biting and insulting, this hardnesse of heart, and unmercifulnesse to them in want? this pinching and grudging, and grinding their faces; this contention and unwillingnesse to forgive? Thou sayest, thou hatest the World, Sin and Lust; but, why then is thy willing serving of it, and this rejoycing in it, and mourning for want, and this total imployment about it; and these burning lusts, and fierie malice? Thou sayest, Thou wilt suffer any thing for Christ, as *Peter*; but, what meaneth then thy swearing and fore-swearing, for these great vexations, for these earthly crosses, and this fear of losse, and danger of Death? So that it is not as we imagine, when the Word of Truth comes.

O! that men would cleave to this Word of Truth in Spirit, it would either hew *Agag* in pieces, or else *Saul* should be cut off thereby.

O! that we lived daily in the true understanding of our selves, this would destroy vain glory and pride: We think because we have now a good motion, and then a sweet joy, and feeling, that God must needs love for these; but we see not the lowing and roaring rebellions of the heart that fight against Christ.

And thus most men deal with *Saul*, by halts in Religion, because they begin to look with flesh at the conquest that they have gotten, when thousands are behind, verse 15.

We have brought them from the Amalekites. Here *Saul* again excuseth himself, and pleads their intent to offer Sacrifice, as afterward, verse 21. So that,

So thus in all men not mortified throug Faith, would still have both Joy and Faith, and a Will and Word of his own.

So with *Adam*, so with *Peter*; He would have had ease in the flesh, and Christs companie too, so the young man, *Matth. 19.* see all unmortified.

For, till by the power of God in the crosse, the flesh be subdued; it seeks to live as well as the spirit, and save it self: For there is a self-confidence, a wisdom and a love; which would turn all to its own advantage, which indeed should know or effect nothing at all, and so draws the mind after it.

Thus, we dally with God in the way of Faith, by sparing things that are profitable pleasures.

And thus man excuseth this, or this: I do to follow the World that I may be better fitted to serve God, and to do good to others; and so it appears that it is the end indeed; nay, thus we dissemble with God: For when we say, We would live in freedom and joy; that in that joy we might better praise God our maker: but the end indeed, is for the good and ease of our selves, and the flesh especially, in things that perfect our ease and peace; and though the mind be thereby insnared, we yet deal easily with it, and thus we still reserve our fat things, and deal favourably with them, and these are our greatest enemies.

Then Samuel said, when thou wast little in thine own eyes; This is Gods message wherein he reckons up his favours to him; and secondly, his rebellion against those: I raised thee up of nothing, why didst thou fall on the prey as though I would not have rewarded thee? This Message and Word was to convince Saul of his disobedience; and,

1. He shews the door of mercie.

2. The way of Life; So that,

The free grace of God is the fountain of life to man, and when man is vile and nothing in himself, then is the power of God most shown.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, He hath filled the hungry, and sent the Rich emptie away.

For so is man capable of grace, and the power of God is magnified in weaknesse: What is it that stops thee free grace of God to man, that is that strength and worth of man, that thinks he hath; for were man little enough, he would pray, cry, and believe, and fear: all mischief enters in at the door of pride, or rather, this is the door that shuts out Christ; we still muse what we are, but not what God is: Then in this little and low condition to wait on God in the Word of Truth, and by Faith to walk in his power, shal destroy all enemies; but when vve fight with our power, and so cut and carve to please the flesh, and when we depart from the Word of Truth, we never prosper: not that man by thinking basely shall procure peace, but when simplie he is so; so God is, and will be with him, but mans perverse way is, to turn from his God, and fall upon his prey.

So that, the daily way of miserie to man is his disobedience and forsaking the way of Faith, and turning to the prey.

So *Adam*, so *David*, and *Paul* to his Revelations, so the Prodigal would have the prey; so *Demas* turned to the prey; nay, almost all have been caught in this snare:

For such is the force of sensual lust and imagination, that where God doth not mightilie preserve, man still turns hither.

For the Word of Truth is the Life of man, which, while it lives in man it suffers nothing else to live in him; but when man turns from this, in comes a Legion of lusts and base affections, and imaginations, but this layes all low.

Thus we fall on the prey of the World, which ensnared all men, even believers themselves, thus God bids flee the filtnesse that's in the World through lust, and promisetht that he will be with us, but this we forsake and gather *Mammon* before hand, and fall on the prey, and this choaks all.

So believers dots also on the libertie of the Gospel, and turns it to wantonnesse, and turns to the prey; yea, whatever God doth to man, man turns to it, and simplicitie of Faith is fore-faken.

But see our safetie, God being our portion and freedom, and His Word our Life; so shall we live for ever. verse 20.

And Saul said, I have obeyed: Here is *Sauls* second excuse, wherein he defends himself, that he had done the Commandement of God, which indeed he had done in part; for he had killed many of the *Amalekites*, but yet with reserving part of the Spoil to himself.

1. He sought honour of *Samuel*: Therefore he brought *Agag* alive, and slew him not.

2. The Riches, in sparing the Cattel, under the pretence of sacrifice; so it is with all double hearts in Religion; So that, Man by the light of the Law, shining into him; and working fear by the light of the Gospel manifested, working freedom; may restrain and rectifie many things with a seeming obedience; yet still with a reservation to himself; and some gain to be gotten, which mars all.

As the young man, *Math. 19*. Had done much, with a reservation of false confidence *Ezzra, 3. 3*. Their hearts ran after covetousnesse; so those Libertines, *1 Pet.* They promised libertie, they had great swelling words, &c. Satan is as a Saphira, *Acts 5*.

For nothing goes through flesh but Faith in God, and the power of God in man, this purifies all; but flesh would still have something, and that makes our obedience not simple.

For man is seldom so separate from himself in pure love unto God, but some self-love there is, that is to his fleshly will sticking to him, and purloyning something into his pouch to feed flesh with all.

For mans natural power being enlightned by the evidence of Truth, discovering both the happinesse of believers; and the miserie of the rest: doth produce in man an obedience according to his apprehension; and so far as the blind light workes upon him; but he never comes to a real and actual denial of himself; but there is a building up of his hope thereby: not to a simple heartie believing, and so living; but still with a reservation of believing his own work and love of himself, and such is the Religion of the most.

We spare the King and fat of the Flock; for there is a reservation almost in all: For, when man would believe and live for ever, and with all their hearts; see what a reservation hangs on Righteousnesse, Reason and self-Conceit, so we believe God, but neither because we are such and such.

So there is a stop in our Faith; we still have an eye to something else in our Faith.

And so for love, we love God, but with this limitation, not so much, because, it is good in itself, and truly manifest to us; and that it is good to us, and so mans self still comes in, for want of mortification: For hardly do we any thing wherein we have not some respect to our selves.

And for the Word, we see Religion is the only way, and God the only good, but still there sticks in us a great lyking of the World; we hope for a good in it, and find a marvelous sweet therein.

So that none hath any reason to be proud in Religion, though he have obtained, and done that which many have not done, yet there is still more that he knows not, loves not, does not; it may be thou hast a little Faith, and now and then trusts God, but for the most part denies him, and trusts thy self and arm of flesh, or trusts him for this, or that reason; so a little love to God, but a full love to the World, and thy self. And here we see, that in all Religion two things poisons all, viz. vain glorie, and a beloved World; for, First, we still would have

I ave it; therefore we limite all to this onlie, for we have so many reservations for the World, as a care, time, love, delight, &c. Yet God is shut out of all; yea, after experience of Gods love, how freely do we return to the World again.

Religion then is an absolute yeelding our selves to God and his grace, without reservation of thoughts; that *Agag*, that great Captain of mischief even Infidelitie, and fleshly Confidence, wherein *Amalekite* trusted; yea, the Infant and Suckling, in broad Lufis, and open; these outward objects must be slain, and that by a pure believing, and loving obedience to the Fathers will; here we see, that all coverings will not serve the turn. For when *Samuel* comes, all is destroyed; well-worth him, that is open-hearted, to confesse and live by mercie.

See the difference of mens double hearts, that are still building up and excusing, and alwayes on their own side to build up man; But Faith sets a man against himself, and alwayes on Gods side, pulls him down, and all things in man; For often greatest noughtinesse is covered and hatched under pretence of Religion, as that of *Jezabel* to *Naboth*.

See in the World, what covering of lust, and oppression, what greedinesse, when man thinks that for Religion he should be respected, but Faith and Love reacheth no such thing?

Then *Samuel* said to *Saul*, Hath the Lord as great delight. So *Samuel* pursues him still by the Word of the Lord out of all holds, and yet by the Word of the Lord, opposeth his good seeming intent; layed down by a question, that *Saul* might make answer, and be convinced in himself.

1. He casts out all conceits of a Sacrifice to please God, while the heart is not subject.

2. He illustrats it by way of comparison of these tyvo, that is, *Obedience is better than Sacrifice*.

3. He amplifies it by the contraries, for Rebellion is as the sin of Witch-craft.

4. He denounceth Gods righteous judgements against *Saul*, wherein the cause is in *Saul*; to declare the qualitie thereof: The judgement it self, hath rejected thee, &c. First, note, how *Samuel* pursues him, till he make him yeeld at last to the judgement? So that,

This the proper effect of the Gospel, viz. The proper and kindly working of Gods Truth in man, is still to

bring man down and all things in him, to lay him low in himself; that he may be exalted through mercie in Christ.

Let man denie himself, and become a Fool; saying, *In me dwells no good thing*, I am not able to think any good thought; all our Righteousnesse is as a filthy clout, Phil. 3. *All these are but drosse.*

Thus the Word brings all Sacrifice to nought, the Law given in Thunder to shake mans heart; the Promise made freely, without any respect of mans Righteousnesse, that man may purely believe.

Nay, and the power whereby all is accomplished is in God, not in man; that man, like a begger, daily may wait there: Thus it brought *Paul* to his knees.

First, brings man to fear and weaknesse, before it bring him to Faith, and it keeps him in fear, that he may rest in God.

For man is grown proud and wise against God, else, he had never stood need of his Word; for it should have been a living Word in his heart for ever; as *Paul*, *The weapons of our warfare are mighty, to bring down strong holds.*

But see the very truth is perverted by man, for though *Samuel* come to beat *Saul* of his hold, yet he still finds other shifts; like a wilie Fox: So men grow wise and cunning, and are lifted up thereby; yea, most yeeld fleshly obedience to this spiritual truth, and thereby becomes holie in conceit.

Others conceiving glorioullie of Christ, and thence grow high minded; for knowledge puffs up, and so becomes a man of high thoughts; but that man in whom the Word lives, and man by it keeps the eye inward towards himself, and keeps down all high thoughts in a quiet sense of their own Weaknesse and Vanitie, to attend with a crying and praying heart for mercie; which is sweetly enjoy'd and not lifted up; but man freed and not hardened thereby: but out of feeling of himself, is pitiful towards all, judgeth none but himself.

This shews the wonderful power of Gods truth that it will make *Saul* to bow, so of any man, even *Pharisees* for the present, though afterward they get up again: Now it is not Sacrifice that he looks for, but a believing loving heart; So that,

All Service and Sacrifice that men seem to offer to God, not flowing from a loving heart, are nothing with him. These

These are like the cutting off a dogs neck, Isa. 1. *Who required these things at thy hand? Psal. 50. I reprove thee not, because of thy Sacrifice, wherewith shall I appear, &c.*

For he stands not need of thee, neither can he be moved by them, unlesse we think as *Balaam*, with his seven Bullocks and Rams.

These are born of the flesh, Children of the bond Woman and not of God, nor by promise: Righteousnesse is nothing, when we make it away to Faith, but when it is an expression of a believing heart then it is sweet.

Now it is not Sacrifice that he condemns, but the cursed opinion that goes with it: Like that in the Law, a daily singing, a daily sacrifice; so with us, when we do it with an evil intent, and not out of a simple mind.

But we have one sacrifice that is Christ only, who hath sacrificed life and all, and that is it that pleaseth God.

Thus it is with us also, our obedience is but to sacrifice to our God at *Gilgall*, that is, to purge sin, and to please God; that we may get an opinion that God is well pleased for that; but this opinion mars all, it is not our obedience that is any thing to God in the Work, but our yeelding heart: For most have looking to that which they have done, some looking at it, as *Pharaoh*.

This crosseth the free sacrifice of love; it is a great point of simplicitie in the hight of our obedience still to be more vile, and this is the power of Faith, for it shews from whence we had it, not by our own power; Nay, when even in our own selves, we are opposit to God; he hath vouchsafed his grace.

The only sacrifice of God is a broken and contrite heart, sacrifice thy self, and it is in stead of all thy lusts, desires, ease, peace, life and all; and when thou hast done that, thou shall have, as Christ, had victory over all; a Resurrection, a Freedom and a Glory; and so shall sit at Christs right hand by Faith till all be subdued to thee, and then man offers sacrifice of praise, confessing his name, not to purge sin, but in expression of Gods love and manifestation, and that in love and mercie and not in sacrifice.

Obedience is better than Sacrifice; So that,

That which is accepted, is an obedient heart, subject to the Fathers will in love, is the Life of all Religion, and better than a thousand Sacrifices, Isa. 50.

God opened mine ear, and I was not disobedient, and Samuel said, Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth, Christ yeelded himself to the Father: Also David, the will of the Lord be done, and Christ to the Pharisees, Ye tithe mint, annise and cummin. &c. Psal. 8. If my people had hearkened.

For God is the sole Lord over all, and man a silly creature, and as the life of a subject is in obedience to a Prince, so here is mans happinesse in yeelding to Gods will; for that must stand whether man be obedient or not, for disobedience was that which cast off Adam and Israel; that is, because man will needs be God.

Now obedience is two-fold, of Faith and Love. Obedience of Faith is, when the clear evidence of the Truth of the Promise, and mans Reason and Wisdom yeelds to that Truth; as Moses at the Red-Sea, and Abraham: When man sees no reason in himself, that God should or will keep promise, but the contrary, he seeing nothing but rebellion and iniquitie, and yet sticks to that, where all reasonable wayes of the World, and all threats of Satan are overcome, though the World threaten want; yet he believes fulnesse, for this is the will of God that ye believe.

But most believe not, but rebell in this, for though God hath promised, yet we obey not, believe not, but give the promise the lye; and say, That God will not do, and therefore fear.

So that infidelitie is the great Rebel that strikes at the Truth of God, which a man cannot endure.

This Faith also mars not obedience, in neither limiting God a time but waiting; nor a measure, but believing that it shall be our rest. Obedience of love is the end of the Law, where the love of Christ enforceth man; and this is a sweet and free yeelding up of a mans life unto God, as a Sacrifice, Rom, 12. Which cannot be till our bodies and flesh be sacrificed; and then in the Spirit of our minds we are revived according to the will of God.

This is not to be a foundation of Faith, but a necessary expression of the love and goodnesse of God to man: This flows from Faith naturally, there is nothing but rebellion and lust, if Faith fail to wait on God; God doth this obedience, and man fleeth, and man seeketh shifts, or some device.

The intent is, doing what he commands not, because the Law forceth so many thievish hearts are bound to be true, but not from the heart.

And.

And warms of Gods love in the heart to suffer for his sake, what ever befalls, as the Martyrs did; but this shews the little obedience in man: For indeed neither will ye yeeld, but the old contention remains, whether shall be God: Faith and Love is the obedience and life of man, and when man lives in this yeelding temper, nothing can vex him; let impossibility come, and he is obedient and suffers: And so was Christ obedient unto the death of the Crosse.

But, while man hath a will and love of himself, he is never freely obedient, but would frame Gods will to his; and to hearken to Satans voice rather than Gods; So that,

An open ear to hear, and a heart to believe and obey the voice of God, and the Word of Truth, is better than all seeming sacrifice a man can offer, Isa. 45. *Incline your ears, &c.* Then shall ye hear the voice of God, and he that hears, shall live; *He opened mine ear, and I was not disobedient.*

So to that end God hath given his Word to man, that thereby he might be called back again to God: *Therefore God saith, Cry aloud to man, and bid him return and come and live for ever, and so he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.*

When God sets his love, and mercie, and truth to, or before man; and when man attends and meets God here, then is that Word accomplished to man.

But Christ may still say, *who hath believed our report*, as to Israel, but Israel would not hear; for man hath two Preachers before him still.

1. Satan, who by his Ministers, the World and the Flesh daily whispers, and calls man to obey; as to Christ, Satan saith, *I will give thee all those*: the World calls, here is Riches, the flesh calls, here is peace, ease and honour; God calls, and saith, *Here is all in me*: Now look whose voice takes place, and is believed, so man prospers.

Man hears as God manifests, and herein is a reasonable mystery and spiritual power; by the one, man growes wise, and by the other, faithful and obedient. *For rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft.*

Man through rebellion of his own heart, and stubbornnesse of his own will, runs away from God; forsakes the Covenant of peace, casts off obedience and himself to misery in the end, as *Pharaoh* and *Saul* here.

S E R M O N X X I I I .

I Sam. 4. 3. 4. 5. *So when the people were come into the Camp , the Elders of Israel said , wherefore hath the Lord smitten us this day before the Philistins.*

When God had governed *Israel* by Judges for many years , and manifested his power and truth by his Priests and Prophets, in bringing them into the Land of Promise , according to the Covenant ; and given them many victories over their enemies. *Israel* grew secure and presumptuous, yea, the *Egyptian* Priest himself grew so careless of the Lords sacrifice, yea, even *Ely* himself, committed them into the hands of his Sons, who filled their bellies and lusts, and that without reproof. Whereupon the Lord intended to destroy that vain confidence, and to proceed against the house of *Ely* , which he fore-tells in the second Chapter , by a man of God ; and in the third, by *Sa-muel* ; which in the fourth Chapter, he brings to passe. First , by giving *Israel* into the hands of their enemies once again , and then delivering the Ark into the hands of the *Philistins* , destroying *Ely* and his two sons.

After *Israel* had received the overthrow at the hands of the *Philistins* , they make way for a second, by running further from God ; So that,

This is the way of man , for man by every affliction is either brought nearer to God , or else driven farther from him, and so makes way for greater evils to befall him.

As *David*, who to hide his shame, ran into murther ; so *Adam* having sinned to hide his shame , hides himself from God ; so *Saul* to the Witch of *Endor* ; like a child that grows more cunning , after the whip, more weily , but not more wise : And this through stubbornness and hardness , and pride of wit. But *Joshua* , when they fell before *Ai*, never ceased till he had found out the curse from God, and cast out the execrable thing.

Many things light upon man that touch not his heart , but is so blinded with lust and self-love ; that the light of the truth leads him

him not out, but his wit will needs guide him; God doth nothing in vain.

If man regard not Proceffe, or any hatchment that is coming, he shall see that a writ of Rebellion is coming; and if he regard not that, then a Bailiff comes, and to prison he must; and that God by the righteousness of the Law may bring down mans high heart, that he may depend on mercy.

Thus man grows more vile after a judgement to prevent it, but no more yielding and obedient to escape it. It may be, God hath taken away thy wife, thy husband and father, thy stay and rest; and yet thou onlie invents new devices to rise, but returns not to God that smote thee. But look for it, if God have come near thee and thou yet blind, he will come nearer thee yet, if he intend thee good.

Shall God be still mocked, to see that, nothing doth man good, till his heart be brought down and flee all, that he may rest in God? For he hath as much to do, to bring down thy wit, as thy will, and to destroy thy carnal confidence, and draw thee from thy object. All misery come in at the door, that is by fleeing from God.

Yea, thus doth God deal with his people and children, he delivers them into the hand of their enemies; and then they think to worke it out: and still God makes their works void; then they seek to know all, and he makes that void, &c. and suffers nought to prosper, till man rest in Faith.

The Ark had remained in *Shilo* three hundred years, from *Josua's* time; as *Jos. 18. 7.* All the time of the *Judges*, and now must for the security of *Israel* be removed away; So that,

The long continuance of the Gospel is no argument to prove the perpetuity thereof in any place.

As to the *Jewes* and Churches of *Asia* and *Corinth*. So when man grows more secure thereby, God must remove it, even so to man,

Thou hast lived in the light and peace with God, but if a man grow wanton thereby, the light will grow to darknesse; If with *Israel* thou grow confident of these in thy self, because of these priviledges, they will not stand.

In the words, note *Israels* fainting and trouble of heart upon their overthrow.

1. Their fleshlie device for future safety.

2. Their

2. Their vain confidence in that device, that it might save them.
3. Their vain joy arising thence.
4. The fear of the *Philistins*.

5. *Israels* overthrow, and losse of the Ark, when the Lord had not given them the Victorie, they fainted and began to enquire and murmure, as they did by the Word of *Samuel*, but not by believing hearts; but now, because they had a Prophet, they were strong enough: So that,

A faithlesse way is a fearful fainting way, and a fainting way is alwayes vexed and tormented at the heart by every crosse, where faith waits not in subjection to Gods will and truth.

So the Disciples, Why do you fear, *O you have little faith?*

But faith *David*, I will not fear what man can do unto me; no, not if ten thousands compasse me about, Mat. 16. *Peter* was compassed with fear when Christ should suffer, because *he savoured not the things of God*.

Nay, Experience teacheth us, that faithlesse men are ever afraid at every rumor of danger: At the last day, mens hearts shall fail them for fear of that day; When a believing man, with *David* and *Paul* goes through all dangers with courage; as those, Heb. 11. And the Martyrs, nay, in mans self he shall find, that when faith is darkened, he fears every thing, but when he believes, he overcomes all.

For man walks in darknesse, therefore is the way so fearful; as crosses threaten some ruine to mans fleshlie Kingdom, which lust would not part with all, and he sees no other. This is it that makes the World so full of fear; yea, other faith, fear or security fills all: nay, everie crosse to the worldling gives a wound to the heart: But, What shall his case be, when all shall be taken away.

Even so is all the Power and Will of man, whereby he stands full of fear, because he trusts not God. Not a fear in regard of our weaknesse, and so attending on faith, but a bottom fear, for want of God and his power; & therefore, a running to mans shifts.

No safe way to man then, but by believing under the crosse, and never to judge according to our selves, but still seeing and feeling the weaknesse of man to wait on him in patience.

Come, let us fetch the Ark from Shilo. Here is their device, which seem like to them; but prospered not: So that,

All fleshlie devices of Mans wit, without simple hearted believing, may gain a brain hope; but shall fail and come to nought, when man comes to his tryal,

Fleshly

Fleshly wisdom is a fool in Gods matters, ever leading man to way that will not prosper, though it shape like to the eye of man.

By this, Satan beguiled *Eve*, and thought to have seduced Christ; to argue the Fathers love by Wisdom, that is not subject to the Law of God, when *Israel* believed, *Gideon*, *Jonathan* and *David* overcame with a few, contrary to all reason: When they eyed reason only, then *Sauls* Armour and *Dauids* one hundred and fifty thousand could not prevail.

1. For God hides his wayes from the wit of man, and reveals it to Babes.

2. Satan lurks here to oppose the way of Faith, God hath revealed his Wisdom; but hereby Man becomes wise against God, and gives him the lye.

Thus man deviseth a device against God, and thinks thereby to thrive; and Satan thereby befools man, propounding unto him a likely vway, great power and approbation, that he may fix hereon; and yet hath not God in the very eyes of the World frustrated their devices; as vwhen thou hast great Riches, Land, Wisdom, Friends, and vwhat not, had built him an nest that he might never vwant: yet, he had never good dayes therewith; but either he hath spent all to beggerie, or a slave to it while he hath it; or a languishing of sicknesse: had not Gods foolish way of faith been better.

Thus Satan casts a mist before the eye of Faith, when he would bring God and his vway vwithin compasse of mans vvitt.

Now in the Church, vve grow vvise to comprehend the very purpose of God, and give a reason of his will, and set a lavv to his Justice; and faine a reasonable vway of believing, and his free will and the foreseeing of Faith; God choose man: but it is so of reasonable a Doctrine, it cannot prove true: for Gods truth vvas for ever foolishnesse to vvise men.

See the difference of Gods vway and mans vvitt.

1. The one is alvvayes dark and uncertain.

2. The other sure, the one forsakes God and his Word, the other cleaves to it: The one seems vwell and ends ill, the other contrary.

The safe vway of man is not to trust the device of man, for thou hast seen these fail thee; nay, vwhen they seem likest the other

other quiet contrarie, therefore never dispute how like or unlike, but lay down all and believe.

Hadst thou no Lust, nor Will, nor Witt to trust to; then had Satan no power against thee: For either thy Witt, or thy Will draws thee, on thy Will, when thou art not subject in patience; thy Witt, when thou wilt do Gods Work, thine own way is here.

They would fight Gods battels, but would not attend on him at *Shilo, his own place*. But would draw him from thence to them, so we would have God with us; but not wait on him; we would have the promise fulfilled, but not wait the time; So that,

The sure way is to wait on God in his way, though we see no way out of Reason.

Abraham abode in *Canaan* as a stranger, *Moses* and *Joshua* at *Jordan*, &c.

For the vision is for an appointed time.

This man workes his own woe, when he either invents a way of his own, and will not stay; or joyns fleshly Wisdom, for the furtherance of Gods will; or impatience of delay, appoints a time: Take heed of preferring any thing before God, and his Work and Promise. Many are never well, unlesse the Father be still playing with them.

That it may save us. Here is self-confidence, not that they thought the Ark could save them; but because if they had the Ark with them, God would save them: This is not simple believing, but with relation to something else than God; So that,

Such is carnall confidence in man, it is a snare of Satan wherein he intangles men to draw the heart to look at some Work or Gift of God, and so to believe, because of that; and not for His simple truth and providence.

So *David* thought, that because of the thousands of *Israel*, he should preserve himself; and *Israel* in *Aarons* time, *These are thy Gods, O Israel*, Psal. 30. *Thou hast made my Mountain strong, it shall never be removed.* The Pharisees they were righteous.

For this is to build a house on the sand, for there is no cause that moves God to do good, or man to believe God, but his simple Word and Truth, though God shine and manifest himself in all things; yet when the Soul is turned from God to them, they become snares, as the brasen Serpent, for the mind must have something to rest on.

So that, when God is wanting, Satan the God of this World brings in the fulnesse of the World, and the certainty thereof, and presents them to man.

1. Fulnesse of Riches and Friends will supplie.
2. Self-righteousnesse, and many lusts and failings of love; saying, They will preserve thee.
3. Or, a carnal beholding of Christ, as here to the Ark.
4. Yea, believers are thus drawn, when Christ lives not in them, they suffer with him; but in all there is a bottom darknesse, and fear of hardnesse and self-pride.

Here, Satan layes the foundation of all iniquities; for why doth man covet, oppresse, deceive; but that the World may be his stay, and his confidence? as,

1. Either a blind securitie, from little meddling; or, a blind presumption, because he hath this or that more than others; and yet no more certain, nor better satisfied.

Thus, the blind World is deceived; everie man staying his mind, by looking at something that he hath, or labours to get, something that he hath not; that it may save him, as the rich fool; nay, were it for thy riches and friends, where were thy believing.

Thus, all things become snares, when the mind is fixed on them, and man tyes God to them; which is not a believing of God, but of that portion.

We should worke Righteousnesse, but not look at that Righteousnesse; attend on the Ark, but believe not in it, but rejoyce in it with God.

Adam might use all creatures, but not see a good in them, it is a great point of simplicitie to enjoy all, and not to depend on it; but rejoyce in it with God, and thereby to see the Fountain from whence it flowed, and the weaknesse of man. Nay, such is the deceit thereof, that it lifts man up above himself; man shouts before the victorie. But there will come a day of mourning to *Israel*, this Ark and Riches shall be taken away.

S E R M O N XXIV.

1 Samuel 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Then the Philistins took the Ark of God, and carried it to Ashdod from Eben-ezer.*

THUS we see the fall of *Israel* for trusting in their inventions, and forsaking the power and truth of God. The Ark is now

taken from them, and *Hophnie* and *Phinias* the Priests also ; and now they are left desolate, for *Eli* is now dead, according to the Word of the Lord, which we see must stand ; So that,

No power or device of man shall be able to disannul, or make void the Word of God ; but it shall stand and be accomplished, both to believers, and against the wicked, though man fight against it, and seek to escape it.

He hath spoken, and shall he not perform it ; Yea, *Heaven* and *Earth* shall passe away, but his word shall not passe: He hath said, That *Saul* shall be cut off, all the World cannot uphold him: He hath promised to *Abraham*, nothing shall hinder ; neither four hundred and thirtie years time ; nor the power of *Pharaoh*, nor difficulties in the *Wildernesse*; nor fourtie Kings in *Canaan*: Hath he said. That *Messiah* shall come, he shall be born in the fulnesse of time? Hath he said? He wil preserve *David*: all the power of *Saul*, or *Goliath* shall not kill him? Hath he promised Life to believers, then though Satan rebel & rage, yet the promise shall be *Yea*, and *Amen*? For he is not man, that he should lie; God shall justifie his righteous judgements, that he hath done nothing to man, but he hath told it to man before.

Hereby appears the puritie of Faith, and power of God, under the crosse ; that though man think to shift it, yet judgment shall come: And though man see no Reason, nor help, yet abiding by the Word of God ; he shall finde help, and be delivered: For *David* saith, *Psal. 15.* An honest man will keep his Word though to his hinderance, much more God: For there is nothing to hinder him, He rules man and not man him.

But man fights against this, and rather strives to make the Truth of God a lie, than to yeeld and be subject, God hath said, He will destroy that man, that runs on in wickednesse; and that the wicked, that forget God shall be turned into hell: and yet these men believe it not, but make God a lyer, as the Serpent did to *Eve*, and say, *Tush, God regardeth not good or evil* ; or that he is not that he is ; or doth not that which he hath spoken: So the stubborn casts off his Fathers threats, till he be cast out of doors.

Others think they shall devise some way hereafter to escape; they take any course, rather than believe him; and yet we have seen it with our eyes: Did he not say, He would cut off *Saul*, and destroy *Jerusalem*, cast off the *Jews*, and call in the *Gentiles* ; Remove his Candlestick, and take away his Kingdom, and

and hath he not done these? Nay, hath he not said; *That the drunkard shall come to povertie, and shame; and doth he not say, That the userers and oppressors shall not prosper to the third generation, and that the generation of the just shall be blessed, & do we not see it well.*

Know then, though thou make a mock of it, and of us poor silly flesh, as thou art; and cast it off, and thinks to escape: Yet be sure, it will meet with thee, He should not be a God of truth if thou perish not; holding on thy course; but thou wilt reply, Doth he not say also, That this brings a heart that cannot repent, and thou more unpat than before? But he did not excuse his Word to the *Ninevites*; yet, for the condition of Repentance was understood his general promise; *If he return and forsake his way, he will have mercie.* So that the alteration was in the *Ninevites*, not in God.

Nay, how often doth believers start from this, and believe rather their own devices than God, hath he not said; That nothing but Faith and Love avails: and yet we fix our eyes and hearts on something else; Nay, we believe the truth, because of something else, and not all things for the truths sake; neither because of this or that; rather than because the truth hath spoken.

So that the way of safety is to believe God in faithfulness; shall he speak and not man regard? Therefore, if thou have never so likely means to uphold thee in the flesh, yet if thy heart run from God therein, it will not prosper; and though thou see no way of safety, yet abide patiently by the Word, and wait not what thou would have done, but what he saith: *For the vision is for an appointed time*; but though we have a sure Word, we are to stay the appointed time for we would be now eased, then comforted; yet rest; thou hast a sure foundation, and it may be thou must become yet more weak; Thy Wisdom, Righteousness and Power must yet be more troden down; that so nothing may live in thee, but truth only: As with *Abraham*, when there was nothing but the truth of the Promise left.

The Philistins took the Ark of God. The fear of the God of *Israel*, was upon all Nations, as upon the *Philistins* here in these Words. 1. *The Philistins taking the Ark and carreing it to Ashdod, one of their chief Cities.*

2. Their setting it up by Dagon, their God, the fall of Dagon at the presence of the Ark.

3. Their repairing and setting up again.

4. The second fall, with the losse of his head and hands.

First, the Ark was taken away, for *Israel* was grown secure, because of *Samuels* words. The Ark, and *Eli* the Priest, they were proud, and fat in their own conceit; and so had turned Faith into a blind presumption, and securitie: therefore, it was taken away; So that,

When Man, by reason of any gift, or priviledges; grows proud and secure in himself: not sensible of his own weaknesse and power; and the promise of God: this is the way to lose it.

When *David* was lifted up in his high mountain, he was soon brought low; and when *Paul* was lifted up in abundance; he had a prick in the flesh: When *Israel* made a Covenant with death, God disannul'd it. If *Nebuchadnezzar* be lifted up, upon his Babel; he must be brought down amongst the Beasts: The *Jerus* being a people alwayes boasting, they came to be no people.

1. So thus we forsake God, and cleave to the creature.

2. Hereby simplicitie of believing is lost, and changed into vain and fleshly confidence.

3. This is the way to purge the old heart, and to bring in the heart to God, or else would man never return to him; if he should prosper.

5. Nothing more opposit to the grace of God, than the pride of man: This was the sin of the Angels, being so proud, and doting upon their own excellencies, they despised God in whom they should have been preserved.

And yet this is the snare we all fall into; we enjoy nothing, but the mind is fixed on it, and grows proud of it; and imagines our selves to be strong and safe, because of it; when it is only in the hand of God to be given, and taken at his will, and pleasure, all gifts are to be rejoyced in, but not to be proud of; while we rejoyce only, the mind is kept humble; seeing the fountain, and feeling his weaknesse; but pride hardens and makes secure.

Nay, what gift is it we look not at, and think our selves the better for it; and that our Faith and Hope is nourished by these as much as Gods truth and love is enjoyed: Hath not the rich man more confidence, that he shall not want than the poor man? hath not the righteous man more confidence, his state is good, than the desolate wretch? and yet his righteousness, as his own, brings no ground to believe, but only Gods free grace.

Is this any thing but Pride and Securitie? and making the arm of flesh his stay: Yea, thus are believers drawn; take we heed, that this be not the way for our Land to lose all; we shall bragg of our peace, till we lose it, and of our pride, till we be subdued; yea, of our wealth till we have lost all; yea, of the Gospel, till it be taken from us, as here they did the Ark.

But it is Gods goodnesse to crosse all his, in that wherein they are misled; that man may see what a weak creature he is, and what a weak staff he hath trusted to, as the World, and now is gone; as knowledge, and now as he had neither known God, nor himself.

But know, there will come a parting day from thy dearest object; thy careful Father, tender Mother, dearest Infants, loving Brother and Sister; and all, because thou dorest on them: The way of safetie, is to enjoy all in God, but trust nothing else, and forget all behind.

They brought the Ark, and set it by Dagon. They thought the God of Israel was a terrible God, and all Nations stood in fear of him; therefore, they set him by Dagon; thinking now, they should be sure to overcome: This Dagon was their Idol, from the navel downward like a fish, and upward like a man; but this prospered not them to win God; and Dagon, to trust to the World, and conceive on this God, as they did on Dagon, it would not serve; So that,

No joyning of the Ark and Dagon in our house, nor God and Mammon in our heart; nor fleshly Wit, nor Gods Truth cannot sute together in Gods Kingdom.

Christ saith, *Ye cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon, Christ and Bellial; Christ and Antichrist, if God, be God, serve him, Rom. 5. 6. Know you not to whom ye give your selves Servants; his Servants you are, This is putting new wine into old bottels: Christ gives the Reason, either he will love the one and hate the other; or else forsake the one and stick to the other: The Soul cannot intend two objects at once.*

For, look what respect we have to the one, it draws from the other, God is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and truth, trusted and loved with the spirit of our minds; else no communion with him.

For as a man hath a Garment, a Bodie and a Soul; So Religion,

gion, the garment is the outward form of Actions, Righteousness Holinesse, the body is Truth; Righteousnesse revealed to the Church, apprehended by man, but the Soul of it is the Spirit, even God himself; as the Garment and Body without the Soul, are but dead Corps, and so this without God: So *Paul* distinguished man, into Soul, Body and Spirit; by the Body, the outward Masse of flesh; the Soul, the vital power and sensitive appetites, and natural understanding; by the Spirit, the immortal, or inward part, in right disposing of which, stands mans peace and happinesse.

For if the Bodie be in health, and the Soul in Life amidst the fulnesse of its natural objects; yet no rest, unlesse the Spirit be satisfied also: now when the Spirit of our minds is drawn by sensual power to bodily objects, it wants Life: But leaving all these, being guided to, and joyned to God and Christ, it is then satisfied; and the body cannot be nourished with the pleasure of the Soul without food, nor the Soul with the food of the Body without its objects; neither can the Spirit without them both, without its proper objects and food.

So that the confounding of these is the confusion, and unrest of the Soul.

And yet alace! it is thus in the World; men will needs joyn God and Dagon; Christ and Mammon, without any trust, or thought of God at all, like beasts: Others keep a form of God after the flesh; as they acknowledge his power, and see his justice, and fear and worship him, with a far-off worship; but the heart bowes to Mammon, loves and cleaves to him above all.

Nay, believers joyn these together, some put confidence in God, but more in the World; yea, how soon after God hath shewed himself to man by his truth and love; doth he joyn heart and hands with the World again. So that indeed this eats out all Religion amongst us.

And for fleshly Wisdom, how doth this draw from simple believing, and asking a reason, disputing with him: and joyning the power of man and the power of God; and so making mans free-will a worker with God: So that it is, that man believes not God.

True it is, that man is the subject in whom God workes, yet the life and power of believing and working is in God, and given to man by Faith according to the Promise: and though *Paul* say,

say, *They are workers together*, yet it is in regard of manifestation, not of any power they had over the hearts of men.

Nay, let this God of *Israel* be our only stay, and lay *Sauls* Armour aside: so man abiding in his simple and naked heart, full of weaknesse, like a Child, waiting on Gods simple truth, the Father will come: but when man thinks to help God, he mars all.

Neither is this a way to securitie, but onlie unto those that pervert all truth unto their own destruction; For this is not a secure resting at all adventures, as though the forlorn child could sit down at all adventures, and say, It cannot help my self, my Father must come or I must be lost, but not sensible of his own misery, and forlorn estate: As the Prodigal seeks, and cryes, and prayes, till he come; this keeps him from sleeping; so with us.

So that, Religion is a simple thing and cannot mix it self with any thing, like the Truth, that joynes to none till death; but simply waits on God with Faith and Love.

But when man brings in Dagon, and sets him up: the Soul of man abhors it: or is joyned to it, or is deceived: Then no bringing in of Religion into a fleshly mind, but first, Dagon must down; then Religion will stand.

If ever it be offered to a Worldly mind, it is not an unwelcome guesse, for the Life of that Soul is else-where: It is in the World and pleasures thereof; but the Spirit is dead within them.

Dagon was fallen, Thus the power of God destroyes the Idol; So that,

Thus the Truth of God prevails against the Idol, and will not suffer any thing to stand equal with God in mans heart.

Paul destroyed circumcision from Christ, and Christ and the young man, his weapons taken from him, his high thoughts pulled down.

And thus Gods warriours pulls down groves, and destroyes Idols.

That God may thereby let man see the weaknesse of all power in the creatures. This is the proper work of the Word to pull down high imaginations, and lay them low as the valyes: This truth discovers the vanitie of all the rest; but we, with the *Philistins*, are still building up Dagon; nay, the Ark is not yet come to us, because Dagon is yet standing.

But know, that it must down: So that mans happinesse is in the fall of the flesh, and all the power thereof.

S E R M O N X X V .

Mark 14. 27. *I will smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered.*

Chrift by his death, hath brough life ; this death was spoken of by the Prophets , and often foretold by Christ ; and spoken of more at large , and now is come by suffering to lose all ; that he may gain all : after that he had comforted His Disciples , and left them the pledge of his Love ; he Prophefies of the trouble that shall come to them hereby ; that they may now begin to suffer with him.

1. Grievous wants and persecutions to the offending of all.
2. That man shall not stand at that day by any power at all in man.

In the same he lets them see, that this is the way they must still follow.

This is a sacrifice of his death , whereby the same through Faith is confirmed to us: He shews what shal become of the head, and that they should be offended ; So that,

Though we live in the light of the Gospel , and Sun-shine of Gods blessing ; yet there will come a day that will dash all, and lay it in the dust.

So to *David*, *Abraham*, and the Rich Fool.

For life gotten by the creature must be hid away ; Christ is the common stock of believers.

Woe to the World, for all high mountains must down , thy dearest object and thou must part : When *Israel* was boasting of the Temple , then was the Lord removing it from *Shilo*, or destroying ; *that new Jerusalem might come from heaven.*

See how thou wilt do, when this night comes, we provide light, fire and houses , against cold and night ; but forget this night.

Let believers look for it in their greatest fulnesse and prosperitie , for then will God take away these , that he may be perfected in God.

I will smite the shepherd ; Yea , Christ in the flesh , that he may

may rest solely and simply in God. *Abraham, and the Prodigal-Paul, I know none after the flesh, by taking away fuel from it; So that,*

This is the way to bring man to God, to purifie Faith, to subdue the World, and make Gods power known. This he doth.

1. In that great tribulation that lyes all on heaps.
2. By his love that kills all at the heart, but then we grow wise in the flesh, to seperate the confused heap.
3. By the crosse that wears out all the flesh also.

Woe to them that have none other stay, how will they do, when their Shepherd shall be smitten, like an Orphant, when the Father is dead?

See the vanitie of man, that would still have some hold in the flesh.

But herein doth God blesse his people, when by clearnesse of his truth, he destroyes all imaginations; and by the crosse, destroyes all lust; and leaves man nothing, but God and his Truth.

4. The freedom and happines of man in knowing and savouring nothing after the flesh, Rom. 8. *This is not to walk after the flesh but after the spirit.*

For that which man thus knows, he knows not; and that which he loves not, thus he lusts after; for thus to know God, or to love him, is not to know him: but to know, will, and love all things in God, is to know him indeed: for that man which knows in the flesh, it is not of God, but his own imaginations.

And there will come a scattering day to all fleshlie imaginations, as to *Jerusalem*, and *David's high mountain*, when knowledge shall vanish, and mans fleshly hopes shall be destroyed: Where then will man appear? Thy Husband, thy Child, thy Idol, thy Portion, thy Idea, thy Shapes of Fancy, all shall vanish; yea, thy shepherd too, and nothing left, but God and his Truth: Where then will thy fleshly heart rest? So that,

To believe and trust, when all is scattered, is to believe simply:

For to believe, when all is joy and peace, is rather to believe after the flesh and because of them; which is a turning from God, to his gifts, and then we losse them; but to believe, when we are killed, as *Job*, and the Martyrs; this is to believe God in and from God, and to love in and from him.

When

When *Peter* said, *Though all forsake thee, &c.* Here is *Peter's* blind confidence, wherein, note this comparison of his; though others shall, yet not he; So that,

Pride of heart advancing it self above others, out of a self conceit of some singular gift or power, is the ready way to a fearful fall below all.

As Proverbs, *Pride goeth before destruction*, Luk. 18. The *Pharisees*, So *Israel*, So *Pharaoh*, The *Jews*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, and *Lucifer*.

For this is a turning away from God, and becoming a God to himself.

These conceits arise from the devil, and sets God at nought, destroyes Faith, and sets up mans fleshly conceits, like a Queen.

These have been the ground of all factions in the Church.

God will leave this man free to himself, and others that dote upon him.

Thus we see, that man is a proud creature, he gets nothing, but he is lifted up by it; nay, most labour for abundance, not for necessitie; so much as they may excel.

This conceit sticks fast in all, arising from blindness in regard of our fulnesse; for thou mayst see the iniquitie of all men in thy self.

But faithful men fear and distrust themselves above all, relying on God.

I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee. *Peter* had a blind confidence, not knowing the weaknesse of man; So that,

Man that is presumptuous and bold through fleshly confidence, and his self-power shall never stand nor prosper.

There, this is *David*, Psal. 30. and *Israel* against the *Philistines*; but *David's* boasting else-where was in God only, through God, *we shall do great things.*

For mans standing and preservation is not of himself.

This is a sandy foundation, for as it was but flesh, so it boasted: So, when the foundation was removed, the flesh feared.

Thus man walks presumptuously in all things thinking; I will do this or that, when often he is prevented, and yet will not see it.

But that man walks safely, that walks in fear; for he trusts none but God, and as he fears, so he believes: Faith in God makes man humble in himself.

No surer sign of a fall in believers; than when they begin to boast; nay, this man denied above all; So that,
How far a man is lifted up in any thing, so far he must fall.

S E R M O N XXVI.

Mark 13. 35. 36. *watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house come; whether at Even, or at Midnight, or at the Cock-crowing; or in the morning: lest he coming suddenly, finde you sleeping.*

WE see it verified in this our Brother which we heard the last day, *viz.* That there is no confidence to be put in man; Neither for his wit, power, wealth, or continuance: For we see it daily to be true, *That his breath goeth forth, and he returns to his earth. &c.*

Which is here apparent before us: For was not he with us at our last Brothers burial; and behold, we are now come to accomplish his.

It's not long, but even one day since that he was in life and liking as you are, he sit, as you sit, in place and credit of the World, as you are: he heard where you now hear; he prayed, where you now pray, he walked strong and lusty upon this earth: which must now devour and shut her mouth upon him: and yet could neither the Riches of this World, nor the cryes of his Children, nor favour of Friends beg him of Death, or keep him from the grave; but down he must, to accomplish the Will of, and Purpose of his Maker.

And thus we see what a day; yea, what a night may bring forth, to make the House desolate, the Children Fatherlesse; to separate the Brother and Sister: never to see each other any more, in the flesh.

And thus we see the Lord comes daily amongst us, though we think our selves secure, because as yet we have escaped that common judgement, so frequent in our neighbour towns; yet, God lets us see that he hath more destroying Angels than one which are kept

kept in the secret of his Counsel, and stricks according to his purpose; and will sometimes, by a long easie stroak; sometimes, by a sharp, and shorter blow; sometimes; by a sudden stab of his providence, that cannot be resisted; yet not sudden, in respect of God, with whom all things are determined; but in regard of our securitie: For as one saith, *Non subito minantur, qui semper patant se esse morituros.* Nothing sudden, but what is unexpected. Only this learn by Gods dealing with him. That we have no surer time of life, then he had.

And that it is neither wit, nor wealth, strength nor health, that can prolong thy dayes; or put off death, or secure thee one hour.

Therefore learn by him, to watch till our master come, which is the lesson Christ would teach his Disciples in these Words, and in this whole Chapter, which is a Prophecie, and foretelling of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of the coming of Christ; the one, a figure of the other: From verse 24. He shews the sign of the end of the World; and thereby, stirs up all to wait, because of the uncertainty; not known to the Son of Man, which verse 34. He amplifies, or illustrats, by a parable, of a man going into a far Countrey, leaves his house, and appoints work to his Servants, and commands the Porter to watch, and thereupon applies the parable, and renews the caveat, in these words; wherein.

1. A caveat for all to wach, and wait for death and doom.
2. His reason from the uncertainty of the time thereof.
3. The danger of being taken unprepared, lest he find us sleeping.

1. *The master of the house, viz.* Christ is gone into a far Countrey, *viz.* Far from the knowledg of all human fleshly wisdom, and given authoritie to his Servants, *viz.* to his Ministers, to guide and govern his Church and Household, by his Word and Discipline, and to everie man his work, *viz.* His Word to husband, and to walk in love and do good to all; to further his glorie and kingdom, as he gave the *Vineyard* to husbandmen, *viz.* His Gospel; and commanded the Porter to watch, *viz.* His Ministers to watch over the flock: Therefore, he bids both Ministers and people watch; and attend his coming in faithfulness; that so, they waiting in Faith, may receive mercie; So that,

The work of a believing heart and faithful servant, here is nothing

thing else, but a daily waiting of the will and pleasure of the Lord, by Faith and patience in love, and attending his coming by death and doom.

This Christ often gives in charge, as Luk. 1. 21. Matth. 24. Luk. 12. And this *Job* practised, 14. 14. This *Paul* saw, and waited for, 1 Tim. 4. *I am now ready to be offered, and, 2 Cor. 5. we sigh and groan, desiring to go hence, and be with the Lord; and the Martyrs.*

1. For here we have no habitation, but like Pilgrims in tents.

2. For God hath sent us hither a while, to accomplish his Will according to his Word; but our abiding hereafter is eternal, not to build a nest here; or, think our houses shall continue; but to wait on his coming; when we shall have the reward and doom, that lasteth for ever.

We see it in all faithful Servants, how careful they are to have all in a readinesse, when the Master comes home: and the Maid, how doth she sweep, and wash, and scoure, that her Mistres may find all right; but the carelesse, they sport and ravel, and spend and waste on their Lusts; and when they have done, lye down and sleep, and say, Nay, the Master will be long before he come.

1. And thus it fareth with the secure World, we watch all opportunities but this: When a man hath a great businesse to do, O! how he mused, and thinketh, and studieth night and day; be it suite in Law, or any other project, or danger upon the event; whereof depends his making or undoing? how doth he neglect no inferiour businesse? He runs and rides, he spares no pains against that day, that he may be provided for good issue.

And have we any greater businesse than this; yea, when he hath a sum of monie to pay; how he cares and casts about?

And is not here a great account to make? nay, how do we watch for a fair day in harvest, and ply our time; and yet this great businesse we heed not?

2. Nay, nothing will make us wait on God, but the Crosse; as to the Disciples, Do we watch to get out of the World; or rather, to run farther into it: As it was in the dayes of *Noah*; so now, nay worse: For now the World is drowned in carelesnesse; witness our excessive drinkings, and endlesse drunkennesse; our too common trade of usurie, and oppression; our neglect of the Word and Sacraments; that we watch nothing, but our lusts,

and pleasures : Mammon and our own Wills: and like these waste our Masters goods , and strike our Fellow-servants , and withhold a portion from the poor. Will not the Lord of the Church call for a reckoning for these : and if we be taken in these , woe unto us? We know what is the hire of such faithless Servants. We watch the plague to prevent death, but we wait not on God to meet death ; we watch the enemy of our Land, that we be not surprized ; but we have an enemy within, that will overthrow us : We provide against famine , and yet our selves pine.

Now this watching is not any power in man to preserve himself, but sensible of his own weaknesse to preserve himself, and longing to be with Christ.

1. That we wait in Faith upon the Word of Christ , believing the promise, though we see nothing but miserie; and death , yet expecting life and freedom according to that Word.

2. That we be working in love, and obedient to his Will, not seeking, or serving our own Lusts; even so, as we would have Christ to finde us, when he comes.

3. Truly knowing our own danger, and the strength of the Devil, and the World over us , daily drawing us to forget this day.

That which Christ said , *come*, is, or should be the care of all our Watch.

1. If our love were to Christ, would we not wait for him as the Wife for her Husband, and the Child for the Father?

2. If we knew our danger, we would not sleep, and suffer our House to be broken up.

3. If we believe the nearnesse, or uncertainty of his coming, We would watch better.

For we know not when our Master will come. So that in this we see the reason , *vix.* The uncertainty of the time of his coming.

1. The certainty of his coming , that the Master will return; Death and Doom shall light upon all.

2. That he will come at an unset time, when the World is secure.

3. That none shall escape it.

4. That everie one shall be accountant.

No escaping of this day , for as the balliff, it pursues man though

though he flee as a Traitor, and having arrested him, Phis-
s nor friends: cannot bail him, but he must dye.

When the Scripture speaks of this day, it seems to hasten it,
though it were at hand, even on our necks, as, Dan. 7. 9,
And Paul, upon whom the ends of the world are come, And
r, The end of all things are at hand, but of that day, knows no
; The Father hath put them in his own power; So that,
The dayes of man are only numbred of God, and the hour
of death unknown to man, but he will come when he
thinks least thereof.

When they cry, Peace, peace. &c. And yet it cannot belong to
any: and for the general day, all the Prophecies of Christ are
near fulfilled, as the spreading of Error, and Heresies, Wars;
Plagues and Prodigies are now abroad; Faith scarcely found,
trade of iniquitie in growth: Love extinct: And if the Gos-
pel be preached through the World, it may be before we
parte this place

1. How fond are they then that will calculate this day: as
the Heathen of old, by their Chimick year, and golden
number fifteen thousand years: as also the *Chineans* in *Austins*
time: Who said, It should be four hundred years after the A-
scension; and Papists by the coming of Anti-Christ; who was
to be of the Tribe of *Dan*, and reign three years and a half in
Jerusalem, and subdue all the World, and then shall the
end come: But let God be wise, and all men fools and lyers;
for this is not to be known; but waited on in all straits and
wants.

1. He vvill come it may be in the first or second vvatch; or at
the dawning.

2. At death, not as thou lustest; for vve vvould all have him
to stay till the dawning: But attend, and he vvill come. O!
What a day vvill that be, vvhen thou looks for Life and Wealth,
&c. And Death comes and vvill not stay?

Lest ye be found sleeping.

None so great danger to man, as a sleepe securitie, and
mindlesse of his ovvn frailtie, and the judgements of
God.

Thus, *Sodom*, and the Old World, And so shall the coming of the Son
of man be: Wealth and Riches make secure, as Luk. 12. Pleasures of
the

of the flesh makes secure, as *Sodom*; yea, the freedom of the Gospel makes secure, being turned into the flesh; nothing keeps man waking but the Crosse; and thus the World is fallen a sleep, only dreams of these things.

But a waking day will come; when the sound of the Trumpet of the Word sounds in thy heart; or if not, the sound of the last Trump; and then happie he, whom the Master shall find waking.



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